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Pass Christian

The Depot, Pass Christian, Miss.

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Discovered

by
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Pass Christian Discovered

An Invitation:

The Reader is cordially invited to improve upon this history by submitting tales, folklore, and legends. If an error is found for recommended correction, please send evidence or reference for its proper deletion or modification.
The Reader is also encouraged to send photographs, maps, and or, diagrams. These will be returned upon request.

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First Edition: March 1997
First Revision: August 1997
Second Edition: July 2000

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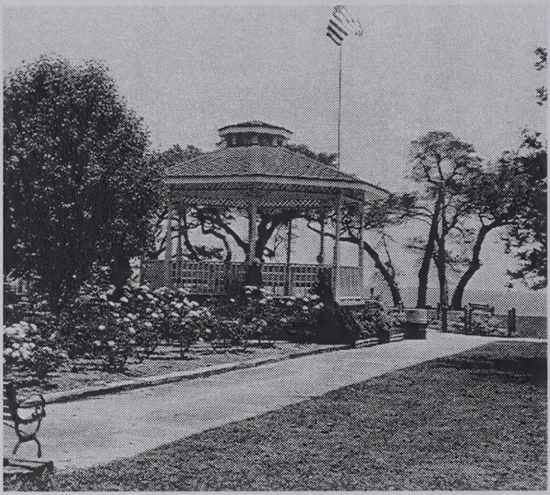

PASS CHRISTIAN is composed of tradition, heritage and beauty. It is rich in its past; and fabulous in its day to day style of living. *The Pass* is sublime with a blending of local and newcomer residents. Gazebo gardens, and piers reaching out into the Mississippi Sound, and antebellum homes -- are symbolic with its past and present. Miss Adele Bielenberg, a retired educator and champion of the values of this heritage, is seated with a friend at the City Pavillion, which once stood above the waters at the foot of Davis Avenue.

Miss Adele Bielenberg and friend on the City Pavilion at Davis Avenue.

WELCOME TO HISTORIC
PASS CHRISTIAN
ON THE GULF COAST

INTRODUCTION

The Book -- by Dan Ellis

Having read just about every book and reference that has been available pertaining to Pass Christian's history and having access to nearly 200 category files that Billy Bourdin has arduously assembled on subjects, events and people of the Pass, I have therefore relished the ongoing involvement by furthering my research pertaining to this renowned community. Having written numerous articles, and several books about the Pass, I am most pleased to render this new historical release.

The material gathered from the earliest historic incidents was garnered from many resource documents and interviews. Much of the information was sifted from newspaper clippings amassed in the *Billy Bourdin Historical Collections* which produced some interesting material to work with. But, also gratefully, many of the photographs came from parishioners who faithfully answered the call to browse through their attics and closets. Nap Cassibry also provided additional material and insight to some of the difficult research endeavors performed. Very helpful also, was and is, the staff members at the County Court Houses of Hancock and Harrison as well as the Pass Christian Public Library.

The Cover -- The Pass Christian Depot

Prior to the introduction of the Railroad, the excitement of newly arriving tourists and friends was constant along the several long wharves which extended out to the Sound from Market Street and in front of the VFW Hall (formerly, the *Rhodes Trading Palace*). However, once the Depot was built, most newcomers arrived as train passengers. This then became the new nerve center for Pass townsfolk.

Eugene Aschaffenburg was 87 years old when he reflected on the above and other incidents of interest, such as the Dedeaux brothers who operated a livery stable. *"They use to pick up arriving passengers returning daily from New Orleans aboard the L&N railroad. The family bought their provisions from Farrell's Grocery Store located at the foot of Market Street before Highway 90 was laid out. A Shrimp Factory was then located where the Yacht Club is now."*

(Note: The above information was gleaned from a transcribed interview with Eugene Aschaffenburg by Betty Carlin in 1988. The oral tape series are stored for posterity at the Pass Christian Historical Society.)

Pass Christian – Discovered

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Pass Christian
Birthplace of Southern Yachting

Foot Tracks at the Bayous

Pass Christian was pioneered in 1699 by French-Canadian Pierre LeMoyne D'Iberville and his brother Bienville. Having made foraging probes from Ship Island into the waters of the bays of Biloxi, Pascagoula and Mobile, they sounded for passageway around Cat Island and entered the Bay of St. Louis in seeking the mouth of the Missisippi River.

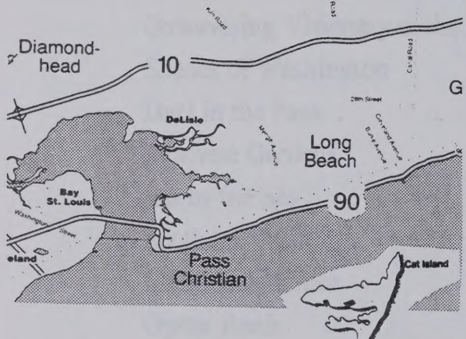
Several of their entourage explored the Bay of St. Louis and penetrated the various water inlets flowing into it as they sought nearby Indians for more knowledge of the terrain. Many of the Indian names of the bayous and rivers were translated to French appellations, reportedly performed by the Comte DeLisle. One of the early chroniclers was Andre Jean Penicaut, who arrived as an 18 year old ship's carpenter and whose "Journals" described the area around Bay St. Louis as being plentiful with buffalo, deer and bear. It was here that many hunting trips were made to secure food for the settlers in Old Biloxi and Mobile. Jean Baptiste Saucier, a French-Canadian sergeant, frequently led small groups of soldiers and Canadians to make camp in the area during the early 1700s. Sometimes they stayed for several months when food supplies dwindled at the Coastal settlements as they awaited expected ship arrivals from France.

Christian and Cuevas at Cat Island

Christian de L'Adnier arrived on the Coast at Mobile in 1719 aboard the Ship "*Le Marie*" from Lucerne, France. He married Marie Brunel and produced three sons. It was Nicholas Christian Ladner, the youngest son, who in 1745, moved to Cat Island where he had been bringing cattle for several years. During one of his visits to New Orleans, in 1758 he chose as his bride, Marianne Paquet. This loving couple produced eleven children and it was from this union that the two channels in the Mississippi Sound, *Pass Christian* and *Pass Marianne*, are credited for their naming. Prior to these names, old French maps called the area *Passe aux Huîtres* for the prolification of oyster reefs and battures.

Later, under Spanish rule, Juan Cuevas was sent to the New World. Following his arrival at Pensacola, he explored the regions of the mainland and the barrier islands. Upon landing at Cat Island, he was introduced to one of the daughters of Christian and Marianne. Juan married her and was invited to remain at the island even after Christian's other sons and daughters departed for the mainland or to New Orleans.

Pass Christian Settlements
Inhabitants of Cat Island, the Pass peninsula, and DeLisle were in frequent communication with each other by way of schooners, canoes, or skiffs. Most of the first marriages took place between the Ladners, Nicaises, Sauciers, Cuevases, Morans, Dubuissons and Lizanas.



Pass Christian -- The Peninsula

It was not until the Spanish Grant of 1781 to Francois Carriére that Pass Christian's existence became officially documented. However, during the 1770s, Carriére, along with other neighbors, journeyed to the British West Florida capital of Pensacola in order to pledge allegiance to English rule. It is quite evident that the Ladners, Cuevases, and Morans of Cat Island and the Sauciers, Nicaises, Grelots and Labats of DeLisle and the Carriéres of Pass Christian were bound together politically, economically and socially. They also participated in shared religious beliefs, bonds of matrimony and baptismal celebrations. Routinely, they communicated by way of the bayous, rivers, the Bay and the Sound, by schooner, skiff, and canoe.

Upon the death of Francois Carriére, Pass Christian was passed to his wife, Donna Julia de la Brosse, who was also known as the Widow Asmard. However, when the Widow died, the disposition of her properties, although set down in her Will of 1797, were not acknowledged. Nevertheless, because she had freed her family slaves, Charles and his wife Madelon and their children, held legal title to a large tract of land which the Widow had given them in a Deed of Gift.

The Charles Asmard property, approximately 680 acres, fronted the beach and extended from west of Market Avenue to the middle of the 400 Block of East Scenic Drive near Seal Avenue and northward

This same property now encompasses most of the commercial district of Pass Christian. Upon the former Negro slave's death in 1835, the unsold portion of his property was passed on to nine of his heirs.

Since the Widow Asmard's Will was not honored, Bartholomew Pellerin, a Spanish Captain, made claim to the vast remaining area of 17,084 arpents, or approximately 14,500 acres. This expansive area included all of Henderson Point extending eastward to Bear Point near the present day University of Southern Mississippi -- Gulf Park Campus at Long Beach. Pellerin sold his lands to Edward Livingston in 1814, who in turn, sold the balance of that vast property to John Henderson in 1836. John Henderson and his son Elliot are acknowledged for developing Pass Christian as a resort community. John Henderson became well known as an outstanding and well versed United States Senator representing Mississippi on its entry into Statehood in 1817.

The Great Oak
Famous for years as the largest Live Oak on the Coast. This majestic giant was known as the *King of Oaks* and was located at Seal Avenue and Second Street, it died in the 1950s. Seal Avenue was originally called Hogs Alley.

Stars and Stripes along the Sound

In 1803, President Jefferson sent James Monroe to France to purchase the City of New Orleans and West Florida, which extended from Baton Rouge to Mobile. Incredibly, Napoleon countered by including the entire Louisiana domain in the sale. W.C.C. Claiborne was sent to New Orleans to assume the Territorial Governorship of Louisiana.

In 1810, Governor Claiborne expanded territorial possessions by claiming West Florida for the United States. This was concluded on January 9, 1811, as a small armada arrived from New Orleans led by Dr. William Flood, who hoisted the American flag announcing control over the water ways of the Gulf of Mexico. In preparing to defend against the British, he stopped at Pearl River, where he designated Simon Favre as a Justice of the Peace and also appointed Philippe Saucier of DeLisle, a Justice. While there, he raised the Stars and Stripes at Bay St. Louis (then, Shieldsboro) and at Pass Christian.

As aggressions increased, the area became a staging ground for military thrusts by American troops in patrolling English garrisons at Mobile and Pensacola. It was near the end of the War of 1812 that a British brigade invaded Ship Island and landed thousands of troops. British forays were discharged to seek out food and stores.

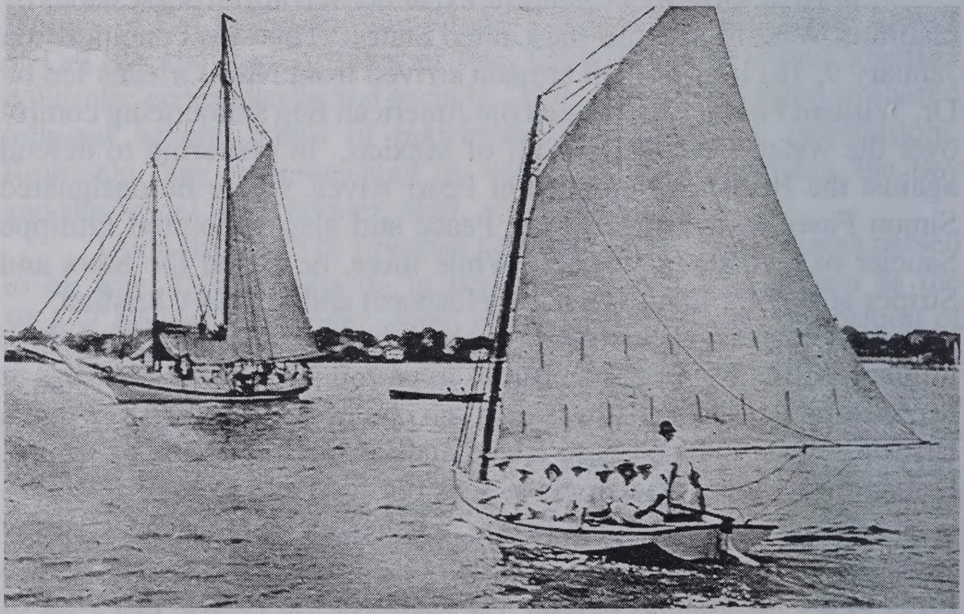
As part of a delaying action, Lieutenant Thomas Ap Catesby Jones aboard the *"Seahorse"* was sent to confront the superior British force in the Mississippi Sound. He anchored his vessels just west of Pass Christian during the night to await the British boats by sun light.

However, he had become bogged down in shallows by a low tide. As the tide reversed and the winds refreshed, they were chased by the British into Lake Borgne, where once more they faced the shallow muddy flats of the Rigolets. Taking a stand, Jones was defeated, but only after 300 British were wounded or killed, as opposed to only 80 American casualties.

This delaying action afforded General Andrew Jackson the benefit of vital defense preparations for the Battle of New Orleans. Before his death, Simon Favre, of Pearl River had won the Choctaw Indians to the friendship of Andrew Jackson, the Pirate, Jean Lafitte, exchanged vows for the support of his marauders, many of the new Americans along the Coast and along the Mississippi River aided in the cause of the Battle of New Orleans in 1815.

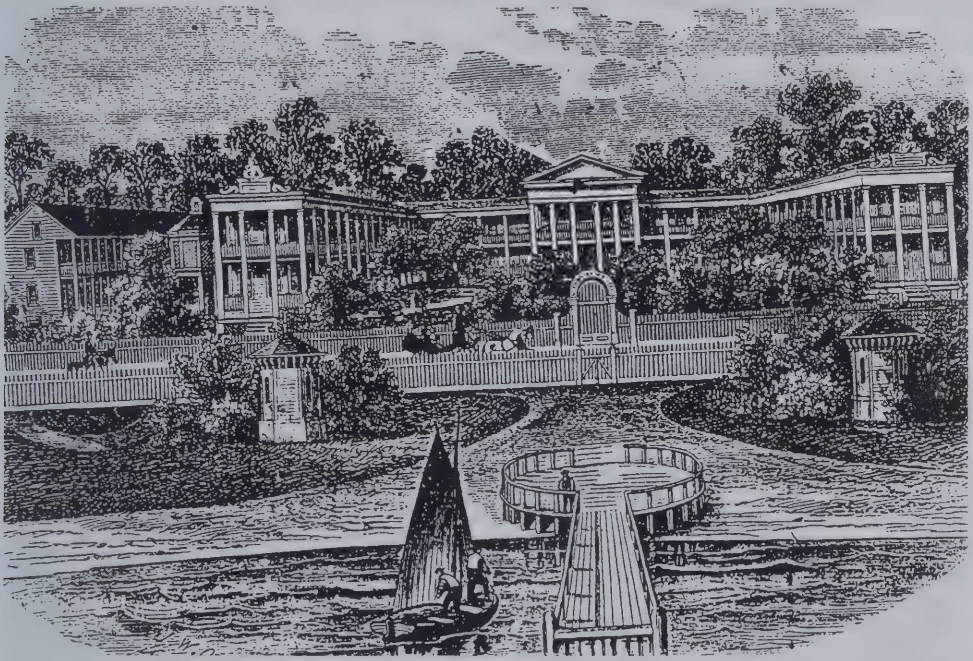
A Thriving Community at The Pass

By the early 1840s, Pass Christian developed into a flourishing community. The Pass had developed as a small port for fishermen as well as a trading center where boats arrived from New Orleans and other port communities along the Coast. Pass Christian was an established and favorite summer retreat for cotton and cane planters from Alabama, Mississippi and Louisiana. These planters were the first to build private cottages and second home villas along the four mile stretch of shell roadway that fronted the beach area of the Mississippi Sound.



Sailing Regattas
Competition and sportsmanship have been the code of honor for the men, women, and children who so aptly train year round in maneuvering the sea-crafts in the Bay, the Sound, and in Bayou Portage. Traditions and disciplines are deeply imbedded in the Yacht Clubs of the Mexican Gulf from Texas to Florida.

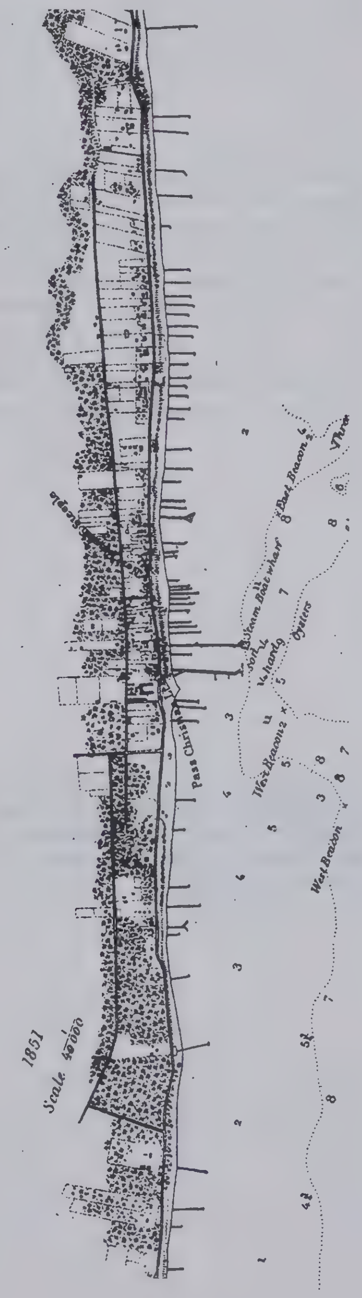
In 1831, construction of the first hotel, the *Pass Christian*, began. Shortly afterwards, appeared the Mansion House, the Sans Souci, the St. Nicholas House, which was exclusively for bachelors, and the Napoleon Hotel; besides several boarding houses and private homes that accomodated guests. Year round commuter service with reliable, inexpensive steamboat connections between New Orleans and Pass Christian encouraged many Orleanians to build homes, resulting in dual citizenship for many. It was at the Pass Christian Hotel that the *Southern Regatta Club* was formed in 1849, which was the precursor to the Southern Yacht Club and the Pass Christian Yacht Club.



All along the coast to the east, fronting the beaches, wealthy people from New Orleans and nearby plantations erected a multitude of mansions, each attempting to outdo the other in majestic architectural performance. Everyone clamored for relaxation and recreation befitting the royalty of the "*Champs Elysee*". This was advantageous for those who could compress their work week and extend their weekends.

When Pass Christian was incorporated in 1838, it was already famous for its gallant and gracious charm and courteous service to its summer guests and residents. The Pass became the largest trading center in Harrison County, exporting many stores and supplies to other world markets. Mississippi pine and cypress timber forests were cut and exported. Throughout the piney woods, kilns were built to produce large quantities of tar and, as a by-product, charcoal.

The Pass Christian Hotel was built in 1831
The opulence, the unflagging service, and the delectable cuisine offered at this hotel until the Civil War, redounded to much favorable publicity for the coastal town of Pass Christian. It was Montgomery, the manager of this fine hotel, who helped promote the regattas which initiated the first yacht club in the South.
The 1851 map below indicates the horse-shoe shape of the Pass Christian hotel near the Lighthouse and had its own wharf nearby to the Steam Boat wharf



Copyright by Dan Ellis, January 1997.

These products were brought by ox-cart to the "Pass" either for local consumption or loaded on ships. Pass Christian also developed as a sheep and wool center, with sheep herders bringing their stock to local auctions for shearing and export. At that time, all roads led to Pass Christian. The Rhodes store, now the VFW hall at Scenic Drive, was where the sheep owners sold their wool to the highest bidders. With the money, the sheep men bought provisions, food, and clothing to take back home with them.

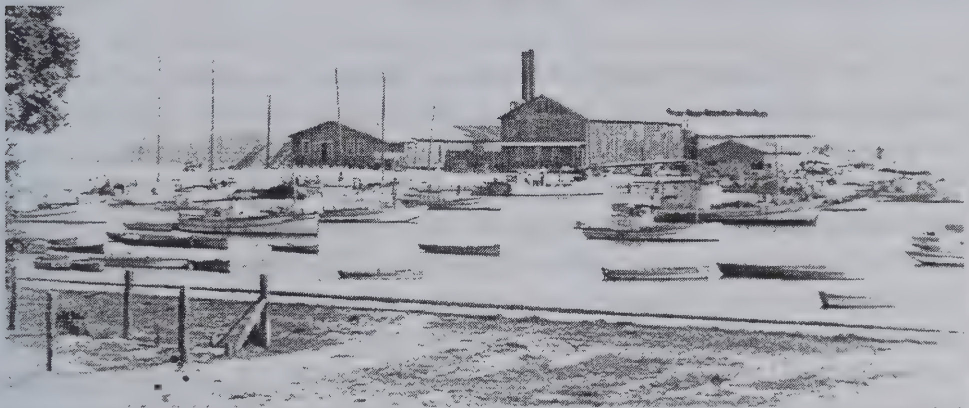
During 1849 and 1850, a renaissance of architectural structures were built along the beach front of Pass Christian. Wealthy people vied with each other in building Antebellum mansions of great splendor. Sixty such homes were built during that period alone. It was also during this period that some of the residents started making their own wines from the grape orchards that they cultivated. By 1860, Pass Christian was recognized as the Queen City of the Mississippi Gulf Coast.

Labor Day weekends have become most meaningful to yacht clubs of the Gulf Yachting Association because of the contribution of the Lipton Challenge Trophy originated by Sir Thomas Lipton in 1919.

Numerous wharfs were built, extending out from the shore embankments into the Mississippi Sound. These stretched along the coast for approximately a mile on each side of the center of town. The wharfs were built high atop pilings. The oldest location was the old Lighthouse wharf, protruding out from the beach in front of the present day City Hall at Hiern Street. This wharf primarily provided docking for the passenger boats arriving from Mobile and New Orleans.

Harbor Factories and Oyster Reefs

Pass Christian possesses some of the finest oyster reefs in the world. One is located just offshore, extending two and a half miles in length. For hundreds of years these reefs have afforded a source of supply to the whole coastal region. One of the earliest seafood plants was owned and operated by Dunbar-Dukate and Company. The plant was located at the present site of the Pass Christian Yacht Club. The plant was originally built in 1902 and was destroyed by the 1947 hurricane.



Dunbar Dukate Cannery - 1902 to 1947
In the foreground of the Pass Harbor was the seafood factory. Ten schooners were owned and operated by the processing plant. The skiffs at anchor represented an additional 150 independent oystermen who like today used hand tongs to gather their resources.

Below: The oystermen below are awaiting their turn to unload at the back end of the factory.

Workers arrived by truck or box car and were housed in special cottages owned by the factory. There was a large apartment building on Market Avenue which the locals called the "White Elephant", and was reported to house as many as 30 families. Additionally, there were the *Row Houses* consisting of rows of duplexes built one after the other.

The "Green Row" on Dunbar Street had 16 duplexes, and the "Red Row" on Woodman Avenue had 19 duplexes. These houses were eventually abandoned when in 1956 mechanical oyster shuckers were installed, thereby eliminating the need for so many employees.

The Pass Christian group of producing oyster beds consists of nine reefs, comprising an area of about twenty square miles. This group of reefs is most significant to the state of Mississippi.

Front Street or Beach Road
Looking east from Hiern Avenue is a typical coastal gazebo. These romantic structures were prolific along the drive of the Gulf beaches. (The Pass was the first coast community to use oyster and clam shells for road surfacing.)

All roads led to Pass Christian

In 1817, Mississippi became a State. Steamboat service was inaugurated between New Orleans and Mobile in 1827. Lighthouses were constructed at the Pass and at Cat Island in 1831. The former Negro slave Carlos (Charlot) Asmard died in 1835 leaving all of his remaining downtown properties to his heirs. And in 1836, Louise Livingston sold the remainder of the Pass Christian peninsula to John Henderson, et al. Henderson was the originator for land sales and development of *Pass Christian Isles* and *Henderson Point*.

It was with these beginnings in the 1830s, that Pass Christian evolved into a thriving community. This was largely due to its proximity to New Orleans and its participation as a "sister city" in culture as well as in its dynamic spirit. Its first mercantile activity was that of a trading center. The *Pass* had developed as a small port for local fishermen and arriving boats passing through to other port communities along the Coast between Mobile and New Orleans.

Former coast historian, Ray Thompson, described that, "Long before Pascagoula, Ocean Springs, Mississippi City or Biloxi had hit their stride entertaining coast visitors, this community of Pass Christian was an old established and favorite summer retreat for the cotton and cane planters of Alabama, Mississippi and Louisiana. These planters were the first to build private cottages and second home villas along the four mile stretch of (shell) roadway that fronted the beach area of Pass Christian."

In 1839, the post office was established. In 1844, the first Catholic Mission Church was built and replaced nearby in 1851 with a larger church mounted with a high steeple. The Catholic church was followed shortly by other faithful Christians who built the Trinity Episcopal Church in 1849.

When Pass Christian was incorporated in 1848, it was already famous for its gallant and gracious charm and courteous service to its summer guests and residents.

During the summer of 1852, a scholar by the name of Benjamin Wailes recorded his journey throughout the coast of Mississippi. He described that, "Two roads led out of this town. The Red Creek Road (Menge Avenue) ran northward following the ridge dividing the Wolf (River) from the Red Creek-Biloxi River System. This was an early farm-to-market trace which brought produce to be sold in the Pass Christian farmer's market. The other road, was the Pass Christian Road (now called Pass Road)." Initially it was an Indian path following the first coastal terrace inland from the Mississippi Sound traversing Harrison County from the Pass to Biloxi, which was a distance of 25 miles. This became the earliest County Road as established in 1842.

Pass Christian became the largest trading center in Harrison County, exporting many stores and supplies to many World markets. Timber forests of Mississippi pine and very tall cypress were extensive. Much of the early cut timber had been exported to France for construction of their naval fleet. Through the years, kilns were built to produce large quantities of tar and, as a by-product, charcoal. These products were brought in by ox-cart to the "Pass" for local consumption, or to be loaded on ships. Pass Christian also developed as a sheep and wool center with sheep herders bringing their stock to local auctions for shearing and export. The Rhodes store, now the VFW hall at Scenic Drive, was where the sheep owners sold their wool to the highest bidders. With the money, the sheep men bought provisions, food, and clothing to take back home with them. From 1820 to 1865, all roads lead to Pass Christian.

In 1897, tracks were laid along the beachfront from Biloxi to Pass Christian in providing local and tourist traffic to travel by streetcar while viewing the beauty of the Mississippi Sound. In 1904, mule power was substituted by electric power. However, since the Beach Avenue residents of the *Pass* refused obstructions on their beaches, the tracks were diverted to Second Street and stoped at Trinity Church. This mode of travel ended in the late 1920s as automobiles made their emergence.

Castles in the Sand

With the building of the New Orleans, Mobile and Chattanooga Railroad in 1869, Pass Christian opened its doors to become the Winter Resort for Northerners seeking to escape the cold. Hotels appeared up and down the beach to care for these frequent visitors.

Pass Christian -- Significant Dates

1699, April, D'lberville explored Bay St. Louis Area

1699, June, Bienville, Jean Baptiste Saucier and others named Bay of St. Louis and hunted wild game on the Peninsula, returning to hunt once more in August on way back to Biloxi.

1700, Jan 12, Bienville sounded the Passe aux Huîtres west of Cat Island. (Oyster Pass)

1700, Jan 22, Bienville stayed night on Bay St. Louis bluffs on returning from Mississippi River

1713-1717, Antoine Crozat promoted land speculation and development in French Louisiana

1717, Madame de Mezieres held concession to all lands around Bay of St. Louis

1718, Map of New France and Gulf by Comte DeLisle

1719, Christian Ladner arrived aboard the "Le Marie" age 20, he married Marie Brunet (Brunel)

1723, Hurricane devastated the Coast from Bay St. Louis to Pascagoula causing many of existing settlers to move to safer havens

1727, Birth of Christian Ladner's son, Nicholas Christian Ladner, who developed Cat Island and later Old Chimneys (at Long Beach)

1732 - Early French Map shows Pass Christian as "Oyster Pass" (Passe aux Huîstres) (in 1732 Map, Pass was called Basudre aux Huîstres)

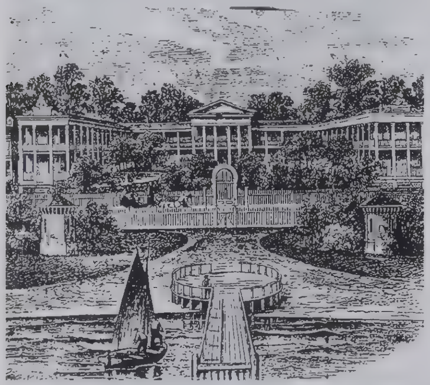
1745, Nicholas Christian Ladner married Marianne Patier, moved to Cat Island (Namesakes for Pass Christian and Pass Marianne)

1763, Treaty of Paris -- French withdrew, ceding East of MS to England and ceding West of MS to Spain including New Orleans

1779, Spanish took control of East and West Florida (Spanish Governor Galvez confirmed all holdings of persons engaged in real occupancy and improvement of lands previously granted during British and French dominion.)

1781, Francois Carriere, Husband of Widow Asmard owned all of Pass Christian peninsula (Spanish Land Grant) (claimed to have been settled earlier by Carriere and used as a Dairy Farm)

Below: The Pass Christian Hotel was built in 1831. The opulence, the unflagging service, and the delectable cuisine offered at this hotel until the Civil War, redounded to much favorable publicity for the coastal town of Pass Christian. It was Montgomery, the manager of this fine hotel, who helped promote the regattas which initiated the first yacht club in the South.



Below: The New Magnolia Hotel was built on the same site as the Pass Christian Hotel. It endured until 1915, when it burned.

Those hotels were imposing wooden structures, which provided fine accommodations with all the amenities for comfort to their guests, both in winter and summer. There were also good boarding houses which were very fashionable during those days.

Each "*Watering Hole*", or hotel spa community, pitted against each other in providing superior services, excellent cuisine and superlative room and suite accommodations.

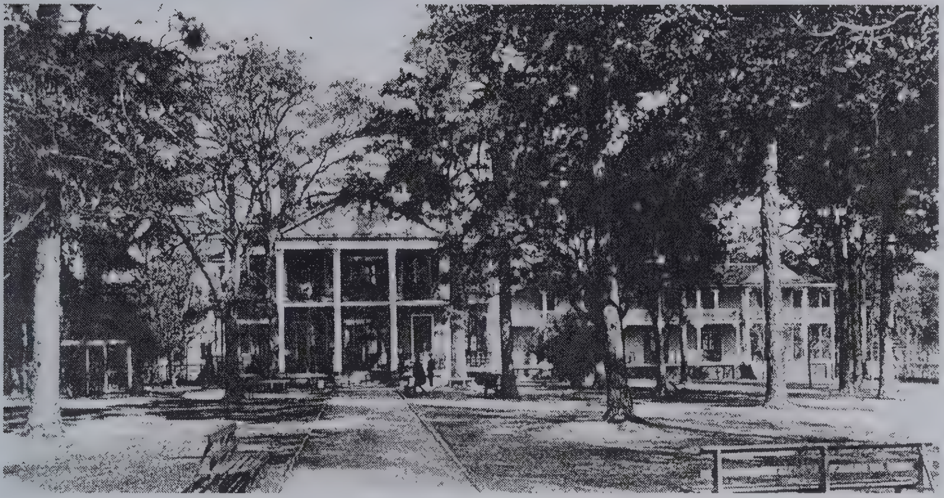
In 1831, the first hotel was built and was called the Pass Christian Hotel. Local historian and educator, Charles Sullivan is credited with stating, "Antebellum Pass Christian was not a town that possessed a hotel but rather, a hotel that possessed a town." The opening of the Pass Christian Hotel put the village on the map. The hotel had promoted itself as the "*best watering-hole on the Lake*", denoting that the Mississippi Sound was an extension of Lake Pontchartrain. Sullivan continued, "Most of our citizens who have a keen scent for good living, like sociability, love a good bottle of wine, and relish a joke, make the Pass Christian Hotel their favorite stomping ground."

The opening of the ***Pass Christian Hotel*** transpired in 1831 bringing to Pass Christian and the entire Gulf Coast such a grandiose facility that all later hotels along the Coast attempted to compete against it.

In 1838, the *New Orleans Daily Picayune* announced that a wharf had been constructed, large enough to transport horse carriages from landing ships. The West wing of the Hotel was also completed.

The Hotel consisted of a center section with a wing on each end with a wide front porch. It was the main stopping place because it was located a short distance from the boat landing. It was later known as the Montgomery hotel for its manager, R.H. Montgomery. With ongoing renovations, it had a main dining room, a ballroom, billiard room, bowling alley, stables, and bathing houses. To the rear was built a "Texas", so named for its use as a bachelor's guest house similar to those provided in Texas which accommodated hard-drinking, male desperados who stayed up all night gambling and being rowdy. In 1866 it was purchased by the Christian Brothers and made into a Catholic College for boys. The building was later remodeled and opened as a hotel again. No other hotel surpassed it until it burned down in 1877.

This favored location was later acquired in 1886 by Rev. Dr. H.C. Mayer who constructed several buildings for an elite school for girls called the Pass Christian Institute. It was later purchased and renovated to become the New Magnolia Hotel which lasted until 1915, when it too, burned. (Today, it is the Miramar Nursing home.)

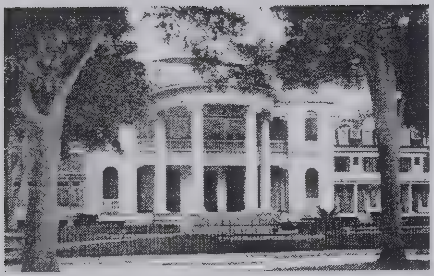


The Lynne Castle Hotel -- 1892 to 1917
This was named for its owner, Louisiana Supreme Court Chief Justice Lynne B. Watkins. It was earlier known as the Pass Christian Military College. The site of construction was where the Pass Christian Village Shopping Center is now located on Highway 90 between Henderson and Clarence.

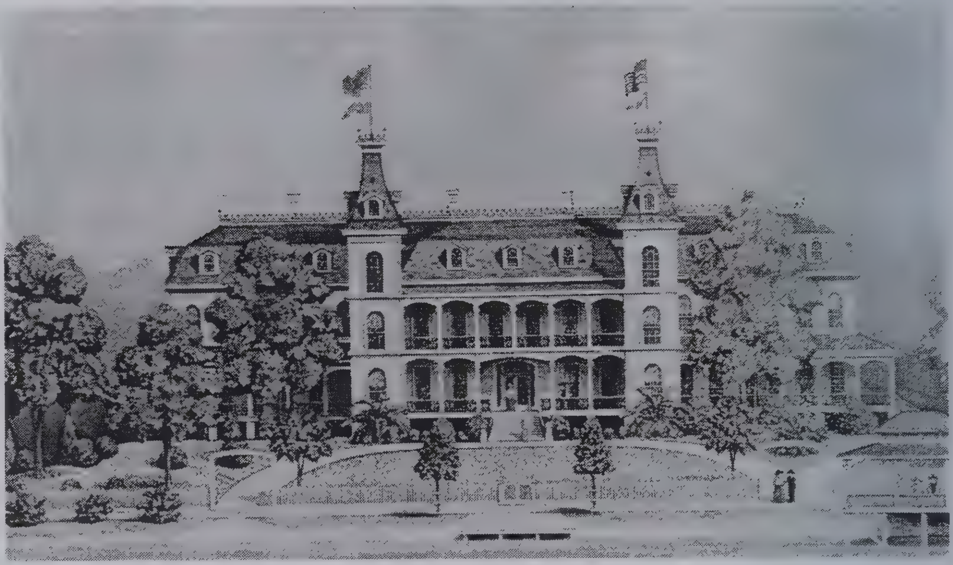
The Lynne Castle was located in Dr. Savage's old Episcopal School, which was located on Beach Road. The building was purchased and renovated by Louisiana Supreme Court Justice Lynne B. Watkins as his private home. Finding it too large, he converted the estate into a 23 guest chamber house in 1892 and placed it under professional management and was called the Lynne Castle. It burned down in 1917.

The Crescent Hotel was run by the Hart family after they acquired the former *Live Oak House* in 1888. It became quite famous for its food, most of which was raised on its own farm. This fine establishment remains as the only extant Hotel in Pass Christian today which is known as the Harbour Inn on Scenic Drive. The present house to the east side was also included in the original Crescent Hotel complex.

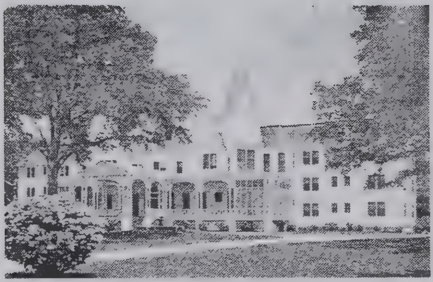
The Mexican Gulf Hotel Company of Pass Christian was organized in 1882 with an authorized capital of $35,000. Before the building was half finished it was found that the cost would be far in excess of the capital stock. The whole plant cost was about $105,000. Doors were opened to guests on June 16th, 1883, with M. J. Crawford as manager. The outstanding indebtedness began to cause trouble from the start. The company defaulted on the bond interest and they were foreclosed upon. The Stockholders led by Frank Howard leased the hotel to Crawford who also struggled along until he spent all of his money and was finally forced out by his creditors in 1887.



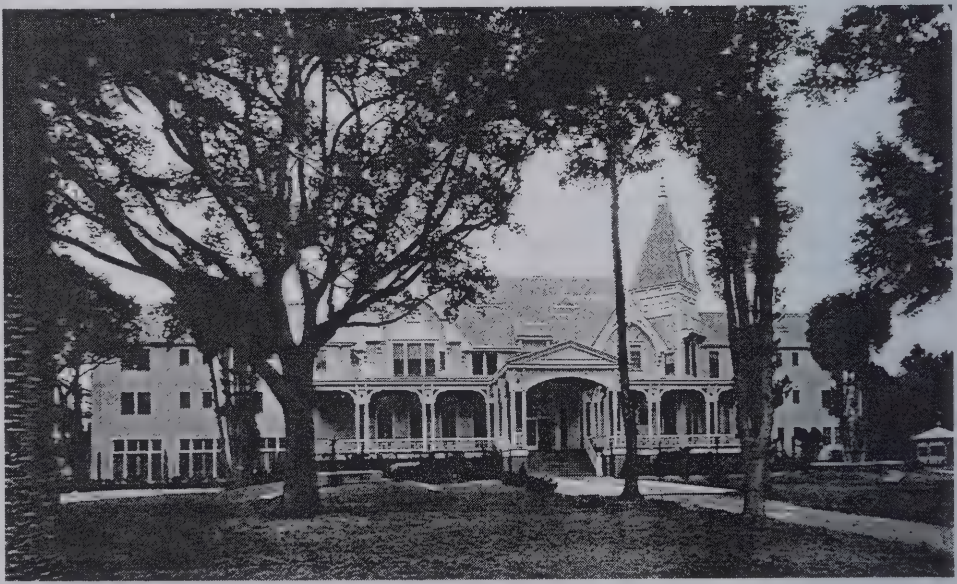
The Mexican Gulf Hotel 1885 - 1917
This celebrated hotel continued the acclaim generated by its predecessor, the Pass Christian Hotel. The architectural structure was considered the finest along the entire coast with all modern conveniences for its time. With 250 guest chambers and parlors the room rates were from three to five dollars per day with special discounts for families or for those on extended stay.



Sam Heaslip, acquired the hotel in 1894, renovated it extensively and provided lighting and heating to the 250 guest rooms and chambers. S.F. Heaslip organized the current Pass Christian Yacht Club and became its first Commodore in 1893. In 1916, Albert Aschaffenberg took possession of the hotel, remodelled it, as in photo above, but it burned before opening on January 8th, 1917.



The Grey Castle Hotel was located in the 900 block of East Scenic Drive. In 1929, the Jesuit Order acquired the hotel as a Catholic retreat home for retiring and vacationing priests. It was renamed Xavier Hall and remained until Camille damages caused it to be razed.



The Grey Castle was a handsome family hotel remodeled by adding wings to each side by contractor, Frank Wittmann in December 1923. It was originally built by Mr. Buckner of New Orleans as a Victorian home on East Beach Boulevard (Scenic Drive). The project included not only the hotel on the beach but a colony of cottages built around many oak and pine trees and beautiful lawns managed by Mrs. William Coutourier. The Grey Castle Hotel thrived during the early 1930's but folded due to the Great Depression and re-opened in 1941 until 1949 as Xavier Hall, a retreat center operated by the Jesuits.

Noting the large number of hotel burnings would make one wonder if their was arson afoot. Downtown Pass Christian also burned extensively in 1838 and again in 1877. The St. Paul Catholic church also burned down in 1876 and the former Pass Christian Hotel was destroyed by fire in 1877. But, these were not the only burnings. There were courthouse burnings that took place in Hancock County also. The Gainsville courthouse burned down in 1853. These catastrophic occurrences resulted in many important property and tax documents having been lost. This was a period when there was little or no fire-fighting equipment and it was also an era of arsonists who put the torch to buildings in order to eliminate competition from neighboring cities or in need of destroying proof of ownership documents. Needless to say, some of the fire losses were not due to arson, but it was strange that downtown Pass Christian burned, but not near the courthouse, yet the court records were indeed destroyed. Thus, much of Pass Christian's early official records do not exist.

Antebellum Homes along Scenic Drive

Scenic Drive is only two-and-a-half miles long and it is entirely within Pass Christian's Historic District which includes 330 acres and consists of 119 dwellings and buildings. For the most part most of the current and former owners of the homes have abided by the national historic preservation restrictions. In 1965, the US News and World Report, the official US Chamber of Commerce magazine, stated that Scenic Drive and Beach Boulevard were one of the three most wealthiest streets in the USA, behind Wall Street and Palm Beach Florida.

During the antebellum period, most construction produced mainly summerhouses, which were single-story structures with a gable roof and three or more bay windows with inset galleries. Typical was a two-room Creole cottage with nogging construction enveloped by foot-thick double-brick exteriors and plastered inside and out. The wall plaster was mixed with deer hair for strengthening and preserving qualities.

Pass Christian – Significant Dates

1781, July 31, Nicholas Christian Ladner registered ownership of Cat Island claiming he had resided on it for 35 years prior (1746)

1781, Juan Cuevas, Andelusian, moved to Cat Island and married Marie Ladner

1781, Jean Baptiste Martial Nicaise moved from Mobile to Wolftown (DeLisle). He married Louise Baptiste Christian Ladner in 1802

1783, Chevalier Dedeaux moved to DeLisle, first wife was Madaline Saucier, Second Wife was Ursule Nicaise

1788, May, Nicholas Christian (Ladner) petitioned and granted land on Coast (Old Chimneys at Long Beach bordering Francois Carriere's Pass Christian)

1793, Dec, Bartheleme Grelot granted 20 arpents in Delisle

1794, July 6, Philip Saucier received Delisle grant, 20 arpents

1796, Pierre Moran moved to northside Wolf River

1796, Will of Julia de la Brosse (Widow Asmard), (codicil in 1797)

1799, Widow Asmard deed of 800 Arpents to Charles Asmar (Her freed slave)

1803, Louisiana Purchase

1804, Coast postal service instituted from Fort Stoddard through Mobile to New Orleans consisting of 200 miles taking 25 days

1805, Indian Treaty resulted in giving up their Coastal lands

1809, Sep, Barthelemy Pellerin surveyed and granted the Pass Peninsula (the former Widow Asmar's Claim excluding Charles' 800 Arpents)

1810, a traveler reported 4 or 5 Free Negroes in the Pass with a number of summer homes built by rich New Orleanians, and 10 to 15 families in Bay St. Louis (Shieldsborough)

1810, forest roads and trails brought many Georgians and Carolinians to the coastal area

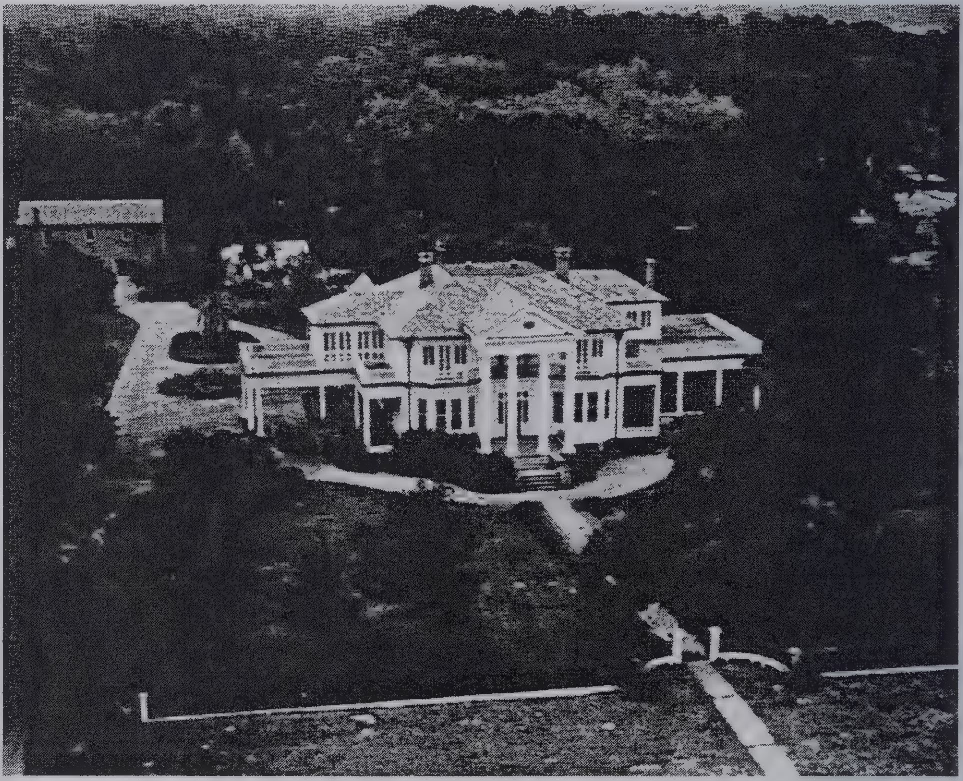
1810, West Florida independence, 74 day Republic, Sep 23 to Dec 10, Lone Star Flag.

1811, Jan 9-13, Claiborne sent Doctor Flood to raise the American Flag on the Gulf coast and to appoint Justices of the Peace, one of whom was Philippe Saucier

Exposed beaded beams and beaded baseboards can still be found in the early nuclear centers of remodeled houses. Cypress blocks were used for foundations with hand-hewn planks for ceilings and cypress beam roofing rafters were covered with green shingles. The huge framing timbers were fastened together by wooden pegs and many of the homes were adorned with hand-carved woodwork, tall columns, and prominent roof lines. Styling was often a blend of Greek Revival and local vernacular ranging from cottages to mansions. These have accounted for 17 distinct architectural styles along the Scenic Drive Historic District.

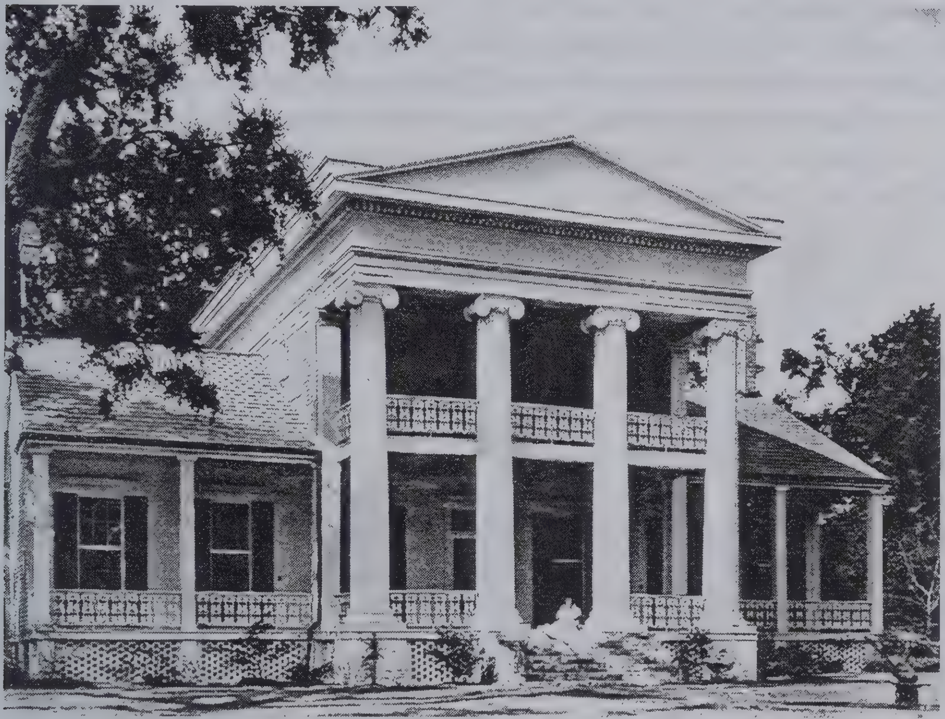
Two of the first major developers of Pass Christian were Edward Livingston and John Henderson.

In 1814, Livingston had purchased most of the peninsula of Pass Christian from Bartholemew Pellerin while at New Orleans. Livingston served in numerous elected positions in New York and in Louisiana. He was also noted for his friendship to Andrew Jackson and to Jean Lafitte. His brother, Robert Livingston, had negotiated the Louisiana Purchase in 1803. Having left his estate to his wife, Louise, she sold the remaining vast area of the peninsula to Henderson, Hughes and Shipman in 1836.



There is some evidence that John Henderson may have occupied this home-site in 1839.
It was located in the 700 block, and during the 1920s to 1950s, it was known as the J.B. Simmons Mansion, He had increased the height of the original structure and added the tall white columns which fronted it. In 1956, Dumas Milner bought it for $75,000.00. It was destroyed by Hurricane Camille.

John Henderson and his son Elliot are credited with having developed Pass Christian as a Resort community. Henderson Point and Henderson Avenue are named for the benefactor who also provided the land for the St. Louis Cemetery owned by the Trinity Episcopal Church.



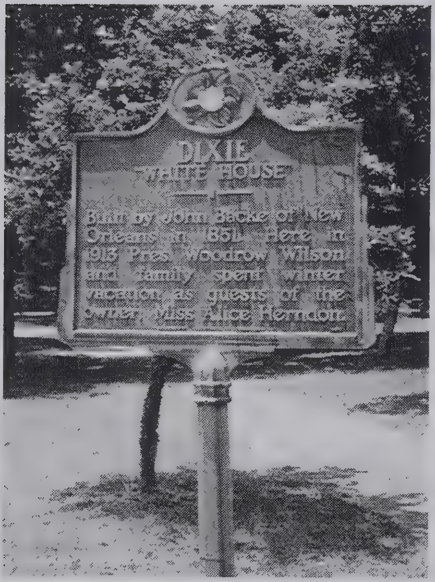
Ossian Hall (1849 - 1969)
The elegant Ossian Hall was a beautiful mansion located in the Beach Hurst area of Pass Christian. Located at East Beach Drive, it was built in 1849 by Seth Guion as a Greek Revival plantation type home.

During the two years of 1849 and 1850, sixty new cottages were built. Some of the residents started cultivation and even produced their own wines from their own grape orchards. One of these men, Alfred Davis, became a well known wine producer from his scuppernong grape. Before the turn of the century, in 1895, Roderick McIntosh, was a saloon-keeper who was considered a connoisseur of liquors and cigars. He owned and named his tavern *"The Sazerac"* after the Royal Street famed Sazerac Saloon in New Orleans and he was proud to equal its quality of drinks and service. The McIntosh tavern was located on First Street (now Scenic Drive) during the 1880s. *The Sazerac* in Pass Christian was a great success because it maintained a large inventory of imported wines, liqueurs, cordials, and choice liquors from all over. The bar-keep also served the famed local Scuppernong Wine produced by Colonel Davis' winery.

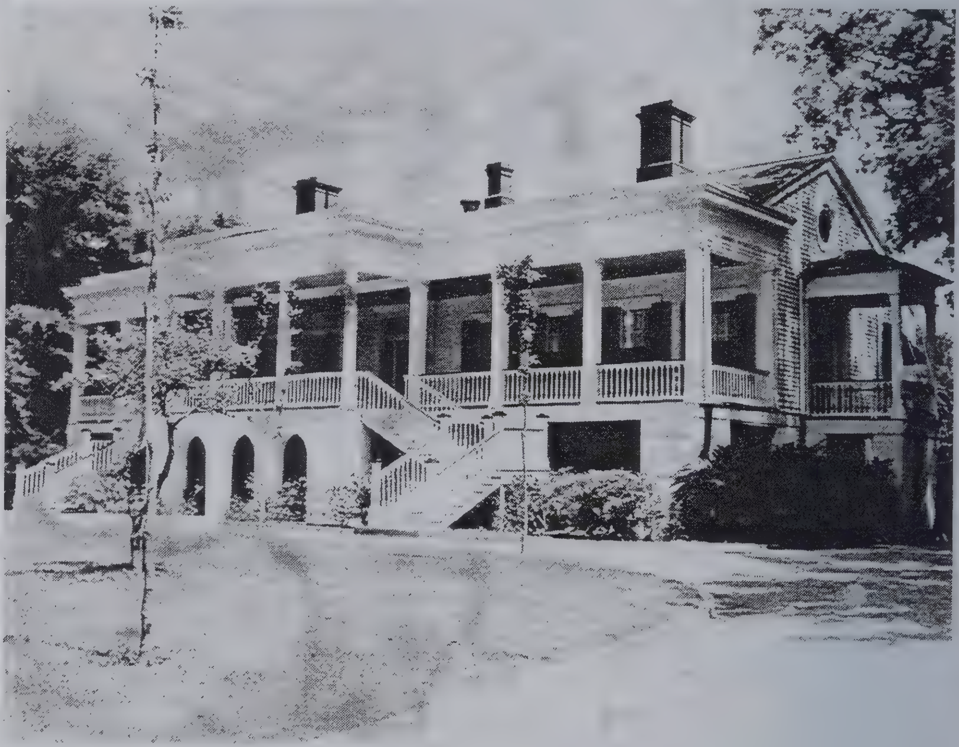
In 1848, Pass Christian was incorporated as a town, soon after the formation of Harrison County in 1841, having derived its name from then president elect, William Henry Harrison.

During the summer of 1847, a reporting from the "*Daily Delta*" of New Orleans, stated, "There are a good number of private residences and villas there, and many staid and solemn people who are perfectly satisfied to sit in their balconies, to smoke their Victorias, curse their appetites, and playout in their imaginations numerous little fishing parties."

By 1860, the population for Harrison County was 5000 in addition to 1000 slaves, and Pass Christian was known as the Queen City of the Mississippi Gulf Coast. At that time, a continuing stream of immigrants and adventurers from the Carolinas and Georgia were settling the Gulf seaboard.


DIXIE
WHITE HOUSE
Built by John Backe of New Orleans in 1851. Here in 1913 Pres. Woodrow Wilson and family spent winter vacation as guests of the owner, Miss Alice Herndon.

The Dixie White House (1851 - 1969)
Another famous elegant home was the Dixie White House. It was named as such because of the significant number of former U.S. presidents who had spent vacation time as guests. These included Ulysses Grant, Teddy Roosevelt, and others, but the most famous visit was by President Woodrow Wilson who arrived the winter of 1912.



Reflections which still remain true:

Following the Civil War, excerpts from letters printed in the New Orleans Times-Democrat described the sentiments of the people who visited the "Pass" during its resurgence of activity.

- "Its groves of oaks and magnolias and its surrounding forests of pine are covered with perennial verdure. Their evergreen foliage produces the impression that one is in the midst of a region of perpetual summer; and this impression is not far wrong as the climate is so mild that roses and violets bloom through the short winter."

- "In the drive along the sea . . . the tourist sees a long succession of luxurious residences in park-like grounds; extensive boarding-houses with rustic benches scattered along the flower-bordered and shrubbery-shaded walks; and hundreds of pretty cottages with hammocks swinging lazily."
- "The numerous fishing and promenade piers, pagoda-ornamented and projecting into the Sound are used for fishing or moonlight flirting, according to the bait used. The waters are more frequented by Spanish mackerel, the famous pompano, the shoal loving flounder . . . frequently speared by pleasure parties."
- "The shapely hulls of vessels lying at anchorage . . . show that boating and yachting are among the liberally patronized amusements here."
- "Sailing excursions out to the islands and around through the Bay are the most popular amusements. One of the favorite excursion points is a great shell mound on the banks of the Wolf River."
- "Immediately in front of Pass Christian is one of the largest oyster beds in this portion of the Gulf. A fleet of 40 or 50 is busy collecting these inexhaustible stores of seafood."
- "The sea-shooting on the nearest islands is fine, ducks, geese, curlew and snipe being found in abundance. Quail shooting is fair. Splendid deer and turkey shooting is enjoyed by camping parties."
- "It could be hardly otherwise here, where the soil may laugh up its harvests of luscious fruits and delicious vegetables to the tickling of the hoe, and the sea gives up its miraculous Galilean profusion of fishes."
- "In summer it is a scene of perfect rest, languorous, delicious siesta-inviting rest; lulled by the tuneful rhythm of ripples breaking on the sandy beach and sweetened by the soft sea breeze that comes stealing over the soothed senses, fresh and pregnant, as if it were breathed form the amorous mouth of Aphrodite."
- "In winter it is a picture of blue skies and green groves, bending and waving the south wind."

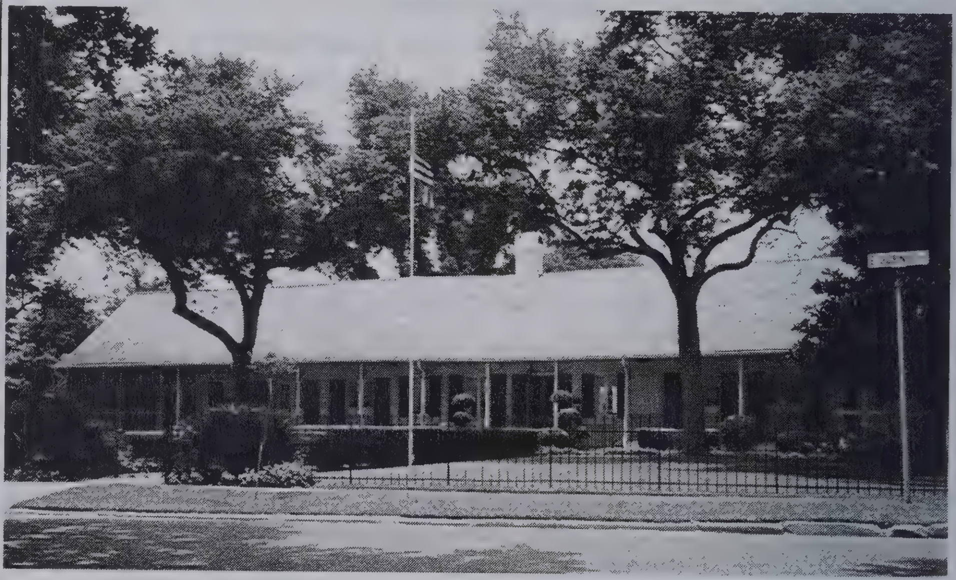
After 1865, newly erected houses were usually larger and often featured hipped or gambrel roofs with inset dormers. As years passed, Pass Christian residents showed an increased tendency to hire architects to design or to re-design their homes. Colonial Revival architecture became popular in endeavoring to be homogenous with the older structures.

Nearly all of the homes along Scenic Drive have historic architectural characteristics for which they are registered in the National Register of Historic Places.

Pass Christian – Significant Dates

1811, Jan 25, Gen Wade Hampton ordered 200 U.S. troops to the Pass followed by British Gen. James Wilkinson arriving with 800 British troops and 14 ships
1811, Dec 14, Mobile County divided into Hancock, Jackson and Mobile
1812, Hancock County formed on Dec 14, from Pearl River to Bay of Biloxi
1812, Jun, War of 1812, ended in 1815
1813, Apr, American Gen Wilkinson took Mobile
1813, Aug, Creeks incited by Spanish killed 500 settlers at Fort Mims Massacre
1814, Mar 27, Andrew Jackson led a contingent of Mississippi and Tennessee militia against Creek Indians at the Battle of Horseshoe Bend
1814, Sep, Jackson headed the Seventh Military District (MS, LA, and TN), he defeated the British at Mobile and at Pensacola
1814, Dec 1, Jackson arrived at New Orleans to prepare defenses against the British
1814, Juan Cuevas at Cat Island was captured by the British, he escaped to the Rigolets to warn the Americans of the English approach.
1814, Edward Livingston purchased the 17,084 Arpents Pass Christian from Pellerin (purchased for $7000 of monies he was paid by Jean Lafitte)
1814, Dec 13, Lt Tac Jones delayed the British armada from Pass Christian to the Regolets
1815, Jan 8, Battle of New Orleans, the victory resulted in the polyglot of Gulf Coast inhabitants becoming Americans and commencing the Great Migration
1817, Mississippi Statehood
1827, Schooner service established between New Orleans and Mobile
1830, Indian Removal Act, Trail of Tears
1830, Pass population was 1,962
1831, Lighthouses built at Pass and Cat Island
1831, Pass Christian Hotel built
1834, Freed Negro, Charlot Asmard's Will, leaving balance of original 800 Arpents of downtown to Family and heirs
1835, Charlot Asmard died
1836, Jan, Edward Livingston's Will to wife Louisa granted remainder of original 17,084 arpents

Even though some homes are small and may seem insignificant by comparison to the mansions which are also located in the Historic District, each is treated with equal deference for its preservation of Historic value. Established ruling guidelines were designed to protect all genuine historic structures from obliteration from their original architectural design. These homes are regulated by the Pass Christian Historic Preservation Commission and are also monitored by the Mississippi Department of Archives and History.

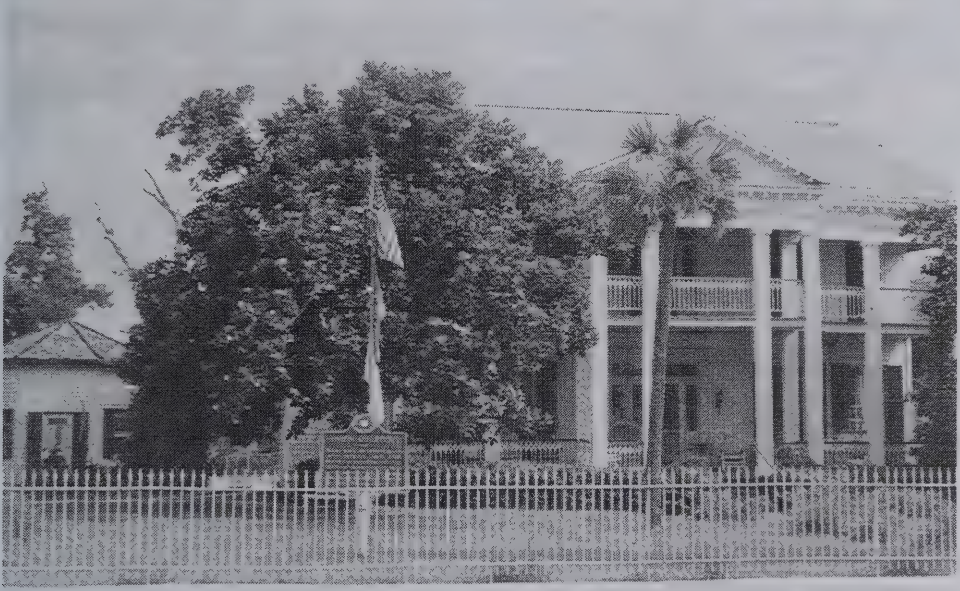


Earliest Homes
The Ballymere is registered as being the oldest home in Pass Christian, although there are other homes which also sustain parts of early history, either by way of a preserved room or two or having remaining foundations beneath the homes. The Ballymere is a Colonial Revival dwelling having as its nucleus an early two-room Creole cottage with nogging construction, double brick, and plastered inside and out. Enlargements were performed in 1853 and in 1928.

Vernacular Greek Revival cottages were indigenous to the entire Mississippi Gulf Coast, both before and after the Civil War. A typical galleried French colonial cottage was characterized by its "T-shaped" floor plan with a gallery that encircled around the arms of the "T" and the main body of the building.

Settlers on the Gulf Coast developed this method of construction in order to maximize the capture of breezes and to provide ample porch space for escaping the sun's direct heat during different times of the day. The fact that this is the very same basic design for Jefferson Davis' *Beauvoir*, demonstrates that it was practical for use in mansions as well as smaller cottages. Although once quite numerous, a large percentage of these houses were prevalent along the Gulf Coast. Unfortunately, in some situations, architectural heritage has been destroyed or remodeled beyond recognition making the ones remaining both rare and significant. **It is for this reason that Pass Christian's Scenic Drive is unique.**

There are more individual homes along the full extent of the Pass Christian Historic District which are listed in the National Registry, than any other community along the Coast. The original historic values of the "Pass" are subtly preserved from diminution and yet sustained in continued prominence. Many of the owners have "open house" during seasons of Annual Pilgrimages, thereby bringing back memories of its prime as Queen City of the Coast.



Saucier-Pratt House
This home is also called the *Union Quarters*, and sometimes the Frank Wharton home. It is an impressive two-story Greek Revival dwelling. This home was built by Pierre Saucier in 1855. He had 14 children, one of whom was Anatol Joseph Saucier who married Mary Toulme of Bay St. Louis. During the Civil War, in April 1862, Federal troops landed at Pass Christian and the officers were billeted at the Saucier home. Mary had hidden her infant son, Anatol Paul, in the attic until she was able to determine that the troops meant no harm. However, when she was requested to play her piano, in defiance, she played the "Bonnie Blue Flag", which was then considered a Rebel battle tune.

During the 1880s and 1890s this beautiful mansion was occupied by Mrs. Louise Bidwell who also owned and managed her deceased husband's properties in New Orleans, including the famous St. Charles Theatre, the Academy of Music and the Phoenix House. When she took residence at the Saucier home, she built the longest pier in the Pass, which extended out into the Sound. She was well known as an expert *fisher*. In one day at the Wolf River, she had 94 fish in her catch, which consisted mostly of red fish and green trout.

This is a reminder of a lifestyle which lasted for better than a hundred years. It was a way of life that thrived on luxury, peacefulness, and graciousness. The nostalgia for that lifestyle is still mimicked today. Many of the mansions have also preserved or restored the outbuildings which usually had a Garconniere, or servant quarters which in time were used as Bachelor quarters or Guest houses. Also predominant were gazebos and "Shoo-Flies". A shoo-fly was usually built around a large live oak for its shade and the platform was raised from the ground as much as ten feet or more in order to optimize the breezes off the beach and to reach above mosquito habitation levels. These platforms were decorated with a lattice facade and usually painted white.

This is where the livin' is easy. Where tea and mint juleps are specially proffered only to personal friends of choice. Where the enchantment of plantation life is manifested in continued glory. Where a persevering spirit for past heritage is mandated and upheld as inviolate. Where even the former newcomers and outsiders have adapted proudly to original Southern Traditions.

Pass Christian -- Significant Dates
1836, Dec, Louisa Livingston sold much of Pass peninsula to John Henderson, Charles Shipman and David Hughes
1837, Trail of Tears, Creeks stayed several months at the Pass, Chief Moniac buried
1838, Pass Christian chartered as a Town, along with Bay St Louis and Biloxi
1838, Pass Christian Downtown area burned
1839, Dec 27, Post Office established
1839, John Henderson, et al, platted and sub-divided the Pass peninsula for land development and lot sales
1839, First Steamboats came into use
1841, Feb 5, Harrison County formed from Hancock and Jackson, July 5 first County Board meeting held at Mississippi City, the County seat
1842, Pass Road from Biloxi to the Pass made a County Road
1843, Night patrol Captain instituted by County, appointed W.M. Mosely followed by F.B. Hiern and later Ely Seph
1843, Land acquired from Edward Saucier for Catholic Church, later returned
1844, First Roman Catholic Mission Church built by Father Labbe
1846, Mississippi Public School Act
1846-1848, Mexican War, Gen Zachary Taylor
1847, First recorded Catholic Baptisms administered by Father Buteux
1848, City boundaries expanded
1849, Trinity Episcopal Church built
1849, Birth of Yachting on the Gulf started at Montgomery's Pass Christian Hotel. It was second in the nation, first in the South
1849-50, More than sixty new cottages built along Beach front
1850, Catholic cemetery established
1851, First, Catholic Parish Church built by Father Guerard, first Pastor
1852, City boundaries expanded
1853, Hancock Courthouse in Gainsville burned
1853, first new yellow fever case in the Pass
1855, John Henderson Will to wife and sons
1858, Jan, Louisa Henderson Will to daughter, Julia and son Elliot
1858, Apr, City Ordinances revised and printed, street names included
1860, N. Bohn started men's clothing store
1861-1865, Civil War

Pass Christian is also home to many of the Majestic Giant Live Oaks along the Coast. Many of these oaks, including magnolias, can be closely observed while driving slowly along tree-lined Scenic Drive. A large number of these Majestic Oaks are aged greater than 300 years.

The "Pass", citing from *The Gulf Coast of Mississippi*, Nola Nance Oliver states that, "God wafts the breath of this favored Southland to the frozen North to show them that summer lives. The thrifty inhabitants send the message northward in luscious fruits and fragrant blossoms that thrive all year on the coast. Here the treasures of earth, sea and sky abound."

The passive beauty of the area and the graciousness of its people emanates a spiritual grace filled with unshakable hope for each new day of adventure.

The "Pass" has its very own unique qualities. It is for this reason that so many have journeyed to make their quest. Many of the home owners access their dwellings only for week-ends or summer get-away facilities. However, much like tourists, the result is that they never penetrate past the facade. Only in everyday living and meeting the permanent citizens can one feel the fullness and rich beauty which is omnisciently offered. One need only visit the merchants shops, or dine at any of the restaurants, or inquire at any of the service offices; to find ingratiating owners and personnel eager to welcome a new person's advent as well as the everyday passerby.

Some say the Legacy of the "Pass" permeates a tranquility that no other community on the Gulf Coast can offer. Others claim the mystique of Pass Christian is imbued by its transcendental ambiance. Everyone affirms that there is an essence of feeling that is indescribably magnificent.

WELCOME TO HISTORIC
PASS CHRISTIAN
ON THE GULF COAST

The Pass Social Club

The century old writings of M.J. Crawford's reminiscences during his tenure as manager of the Mexican Gulf Hotel in 1882 are very engrossing and make delighful reading. He proceeds to describe the Social Club in which he was initiated. All of the gentlemen in his recounting, presumably lived in cottages along the beachfront.

- "But not withstanding all my trials and troubles in that delightful place I had a thoroughly good time between the seasons. The town contained some eighteen hundred inhabitants, twelve hundred of them were colored. There was a small select society of white people whom, before the war were wealthy owners of plantations, but were then reduced to small incomes. A pleasant, kindly set were they of aristocratic descent and breeding. Punctilious in all the observances of good manners themselves they expected the same of all who came in contact with them."

- "There were about a dozen elderly gentlemen who constituted a small club. I was admitted as a member to this charmed circle. Our club room was a small shack that hung over the water, standing on piles. At 12 noon, a quorum being present, we sat down to a table and played "whiskey poker" for an hour. Then we solemnly adjourned to "Nicks" saloon across the way and played the real thing. Those old fellows "stung" me many a time good and plenty."

- "In their way these gentlemen were all remarkable for their characteristics. Dr. Le Roux, a French doctor, a true Gascon amused everybody by the stories of the wonderful cures that he had effected. Dr. Wilkinson, a fine gentleman of the old school, the soul of honor and a firm friend, was liked by everybody. His father was a distinguished general in the early Louisiana wars. He was a skillful doctor, but had grown too old for the regular routine which his profession demanded and had retired to the Pass with his wife and daughter."

- "Colonel Nixon, formerly an editor of the New Orleans Picayune was one of the charter members, a whole-souled gentleman who strictly believed in the code of honor. He as well as Dr. Wilkinson had been often on the field as principals in duels and had served as seconds scores of times. Dr. Wilkinson, on one memorable occasion in which I was interested, told me that he invariably tried to bring about a reconciliation between the contending parties of whom he was one of

"Whiskey Poker"
This group of young men look like they made their win at "Whiskey Poker".

The Little Theatre
In the 1850s, the summer residents formed a Little Theatre which they called *"Entre Nous"*. The first play put on was a comedy billed as the *Marble Statue*. The leading man and the gentleman cast as the villain had a dispute which led to a challenge to duel, but was forestalled amicably by their selected seconds.

the seconds, and had succeeded in many instances in preventing a resort to arms."

- "Colonel Thornton, the druggist of the place, had a distinguished career. He was the last man to oppose the secession of the state of Mississippi from the Union, and finding his efforts unavailing, he joined the Confederate Army and fought heroically for the South. A genial, kindly man, reserved and dignified in bearing, he commanded the respect of all those who had the good fortune to know him."

- "Colonel Davis was a large cotton planter, whose plantations extended for miles along the banks of the Mississippi near Natchez. He owned a large tract of land some five or six miles inland. He had established there a vineyard for the cultivation of scuppernong grapes. This grape is only adopted for the making of wine. The Colonel had imported to this country, from Italy, some twenty families and housed and fed them on his country estate. They were an illiterate lot who knew no language but their own, but they thoroughly understood the cultivation of the grape and the manufacture of wine."

Nostalgic Episodes from 1900 to 1930

The following accounts were captured on audio tapes during 1976 and were transcribed to typed form by Mrs. Betty Carlin of the Pass Christian Historical Society.

- The Brandt family home had burned down in 1917 and they moved into one of the little shacks next door to the old library. Another member of the family owned four little shotgun houses. The old school house had two teachers, Miss Nannie Sutter taught first grade and Miss Emma Walters taught all the rest of the grades. The school building was an old wooden building standing atop high pillars at 110 W. Second Street. *by Mrs. Mary E. Brandt*

- Across from the Town Library was the Air Dome Theater. Sam Taylor operated it as an open air picture show with silent movies. Miss Emma Schorr would play the piano with great emotion. Previous movie places were located on Second St. and at Hiern and Scenic. *by Miss Claire Knost*

Parnell McKay, Publisher -- "Pass Christian Tarpon-Beacon"

The Coast Beacon newspaper had been published in Pass Christian since 1881. One of its owners, E.J. Adam, operated a printing press at his home on Scenic Drive. He sold the *Beacon* and later started the *Tarpon*. Parnell McKay, Sr. purchased the *Tarpon* from E.J. Adam and later that year acquired the faltering *Beacon*. The two newspapers merged to become the Pass Christian Tarpon-Beacon.

The local paper was sustained until its final issue on October 11, 1990. Without celebration, in its 110th year of publication and ending four generations of dedication to the journalistic unfolding in the chronicles of history of Pass Christian and the spirited citizens of the community. The McKay family can be heralded for having produced the "Tarpon-Beacon" which was the longest running periodical on the Coast and had the distinction of being the first daily newspaper in south Mississippi.

- The Rhodes Trade Palace now the VFW was owned by then Mayor Charles M. Rhodes. The family lived upstairs and the store was downstairs. In the back there was a shed where the country people would spend three or four days. They would bring in wool and farm produce and trade for dry goods which arrived by schooners and steam boats. They brought their wool in wagons with tarpaulins covering them. Their oxen and horses were kept back by the railroad. *by Mrs. Margaret C. Farrell*

- Besides Willie Jones, the "Oysterman from Pass Christian", there was a peddler who the locals called *Rain in the Face* who sold crabs for a penny each as he would call out "Crab Bo-Boy-y-y". *by Mrs Justine P. Kuhn.*

- A Free Negro by the name of Charlot owned a house which was located on Scenic Drive. Charlot Asmar actually had been deeded all of the property comprising downtown Pass Christian from a little west of Market Avenue to a little east of Seal Avenue from the Beach to Portage. Following the 1915 Hurricane, Edgar Bohn bought the T.V. Courtenay beach property where the damaged Store was located and moved the Charlot house to it. He later moved it back to its original location in the 500 block. *by Mr. Ad Lang, Sr.*

The ensuing historical tid-bits come from interviews with Tom and John Parker, sons of former Governor John Parker, Sr. who resided on West Beach at their home from 1900 onwards and later at their estate *Windy Hill* at DeLisle.

- Mr Sam Heaslip used to come over and sail out two or three evenings a week in the moonlight to Cat Island to fish in the surf. The next morning he would catch the Coast train back to New Orleans. He had a darkie working for him called "Old Mose", who was also a good fisherman. Mr. Sam loved to drink and he had a few drinks one night and got sleepy as they were sailing back, so he told Old Mose, there's a star. You stay right on that star and take the boat in." But Mose went to sleep too. When he woke up he shook Mr Heaslip and said, "Marse Sam, I just passed that star. Give me another one to go by."

- Father Sorin approached Governor Parker at DeLisle and claimed he needed some money. He said, "They're going to make me a canon in the church. I wonder why they're going to make me a canon?"

Pass Christian -- Significant Dates

1861, Mississippi secession
1862, Federal ships fired upon PC, Bedsheet Surrender, Officers stayed at Union Hdq, lost PC Battle Flag
1865, PC Hotel purchased by Christian Brothers for a Boys' College
1866, The Pass Christian Hotel added a dome when it became Christian Brothers College
1866, End of Mississippi insurection period
1866, 30 sawmills were in operation by Spring throughout the Coast
1867, Yellow fever killed 10 Catholic Brothers and many townfolk
1870, Jan 11, Sisters of Mercy started St Joseph's Academy for Girls (Second in Diocese)
1870, Feb, end of Reconstruction Era, Mississippi Congressional representation was restored in Washington
1870, Sisters of Mercy started St. Joseph Schools
1870, Nov 21, L&N (Mobile and NO) Railroad established along the Coast providing passenger and freight service
1871, Railroad engine and cars crashed into Bay due to piles eaten by marine borers (Toredos)
1873, French Oyster Company opened on Front St. by Albert French
1875, Christian Brothers college closed due to Yellow Fever
1876, Pass Christian Hotel (Christian Brothers College) burned down
1876, St. Paul's Church burned down
1877, Pass Christian Downtown area burned
1877, L&N acquired the Mobile N.O. R.R.
1878, Yellow Fever epidemic
1878, Pass was first to use oyster and clam shells for roadway topping
1879, New, Second Catholic Church opened, dedicated to St. Paul
1879, John McGuinty donated land for a road to the West End RR Station
1880, Gulf Coast Beacon first publication, Gen. J.R. Davis publisher
1880, May 8, Daily Commuter train began run from Ocean Springs to N.O.
1880, Major General Wm S Harney, a Union officer, acquired Beaulieu (Dixie White House), entertained Ulyses S. Grant
1882, New City Charter
1882, St. Joseph's School combined for Boys and Girls

My dad replied, "Because you have performed so many shotgun weddings." . . . Father Sorin served the Parish for more than 50 years. He claimed that the well behind the Our Lady of Good Hope Church in DeLisle beckoned people from all over who would come to bathe in the spring waters in order to rid themselves of rheumatism. In another story, . . . Father Sorin would call intermission to go out to feed his chickens in the middle of mass.

- Edgar Monroe had been having a lot of trouble at his place with the springs. "They've got a lot of natural springs there. He was complaining because he thought he had a leak in the water line, but he found out that it was a natural spring. At that time there were a lot of natural springs that started spurting from the front lawns.

- John Parker Jr. was the president of a local stock group that was called the *Club on Wheels* which bought a private club car which they named "Beauvoir". A contract was made with the Railroad company to hitch the car behind the daily train run. The stock holders also built a shed at the L&N tracks to house it during the winter. It ran from April until October being picked up by the daily train each morning at 7:10 and was separated each evening at 5:10 pm.

- When automobiles appeared in the Pass they were brought in by rail because there were no roads between the Coast and New Orleans. The first roads for autos went from the Coast through Baton Rouge to get to New Orleans. Roads to New Orleans weren't built until ferry boats were established across the Bay, the Rigolets, the Chef Menteur, and other rivers such as the Pearl.

John Parker, Jr.
Son of Louisiana Gov. John Parker, John, Jr. and his brother, Tom, spent a lot of time casting nets from the wharves that ran out to the Gulf.

Unwavering Visionary of the Pass

Albert Aschaffenburg, like many others, fell in love with the Pass and wanted to redevelop the greatness of its past. He had a vision to bring back the tourist trade by establishing the Pass as a winter resort for Northerners and a summer playground once more for Orleanians. He first visited the Pass beginning in 1905 and engaged Frank Wittmann to build the family home in the 600 block of E. Scenic Drive. He organized the Bayou Portage Fishing and Hunting Club in 1912. He had purchased the raw land and built a camp on piling which provided a pier for boats to land and tie up.

In 1915, he promoted a Water Carnival with tournaments in motor boating, sail boating, paddle boating and swimming contests. The Regatta was held in July and known as the Bayou Portage Water Festival. It was a huge success bringing many participants, visitors and tourists together. The evening concluded with a gala ball and dance at the Mexican Gulf Hotel.

Bayou Portage
The larger opening to the Bay St. Louis Bay was sometimes reported to be a Bay in itself and called Bay of the Portage with the northern tributary being called Bayou Portage or Bayou Felix and the southern tributary called Bayou Johnson or, earlier, called Brickhouse Bayou.

Below: These bayous are excellent for water skiing as seen with John Ellis, III turning a spray.

In March of 1915, Aschaffenburg acquired the property from the Beach to the railroad tracks comprising the present War Memorial Park. His plans were to build a subdivision development complete with tennis courts, a playground, and a passenger shelter at the Railroad Depot.

This ambition was disrupted by the Hurricane that year which devastated the entire Coast.

On another occasion, Aschaffenburg approached the then Governor John Parker of Louisiana to provide convict labor to build a road across the marsh areas from New Orleans to the Pass. Ignoring negative statements from engineers regarding feasibility, he proved that the marsh sub-surface was constituted of hard clay which would permit a roadway once the marsh area was scooped away. Pursuing his ideas, he formed the *Motor League of Louisiana* which sponsored the road construction.

He further volunteered to personally supervise the passageway from New Orleans to the Chef Menteur. Ferry services were provided at the Rigolets and the Chef until replacement bridges were erected. The beach road already existed from Waveland to Bay St. Louis and in 1928 the wooden Bay Bridge eliminated the ferry service from the Point to Bay St. Louis.

In the interest of providing a Public Library, he lobbied the City officials to apply for a Carnegie Grant which would pay for the construction of a Public Library facility. He ascertained that any community that would administer the program would be eligible for free money.

Albert Aschaffenburg also brought together a group of investors from New Orleans who bought and remodeled the Mexican Gulf Hotel in 1917, but it burned down on January 8, 1918.

With Aschaffenburg's untimely death in January of 1918, the visions were lost with the passing of the *Visionary*.

Shades of Washington

According to Coast Historian, Nap Cassibry, Henry Washington, a land surveyor and map maker during the early 1800s, was possibly a nephew of George Washington. One of the properties he surveyed was the Pellerin deed which encompassed the whole peninsula of Pass Christian. A Geodetic map is on file at the Pass Christian Historical Association showing that vast area.

In 1845, Colonel Fairfax Washington, whose grandfather, Warner Washington, was a close relative of George Washington, settled in Handsboro, an early settlement now located within the corporate limits of Gulfport. He was a prosperous farmer.

A marker denoting the grave site of Frances Parke Lewis Butler, great, granddaughter of Martha Washington and great niece of General George Washington was unveiled in ceremonies at the Trinity Episcopal Church grounds in Pass Christian.

Standing in as the official family honoree was Richard Morgan of Gulfport, himself, a direct descendant of John Washington, an uncle of General George Washington. John Washington was a prominent physician in the Pass during the 1890s.

Unveiling of the marker took place on July 21, 1976 at Trinity Park grounds facing U.S. Highway 90. Mrs. Butler was born November 27, 1797 and died June 30, 1875 in Pass Christian where she had been a resident for many years.

Pass Christian -- Significant Dates1882, Sullivan vs Ryan fight at Mississippi City, Sullivan reportedly trained at the Pass
1883, Mexican Gulf Hotel opened, built by Gen. George Sherman
1884, First Artesian well dug in east Pass by John T. Hardie
1884, Wolf Town name changed to DeLisle with opening of Post Office
1884, Pass town boundaries expanded
1885, New City Hall established, built by Fred Sutter
1888, First Town water system
1890, M.J. Crawford, manager of Mexican Gulf Hotel wrote *Reminiscences of 1880s*
1893, Town Library started by the Ladie's Library Association
1893, Pass Christian Yacht Club began with revival of two regattas
1895, Charles L. Dyer wrote *Along the Gulf*, L&N Railroad stops
1895, Street ordinance naming Second, Gulf (Hwy 90), Menge, Fleitas, Seal and Boisdore.
1895-1920s, Street car from Biloxi to Pass along the Beach front (2nd St. in the Pass)
1896, Rev. Father R.J. Sorin a native of France became Pastor of Our Lady of Good Hope in DeLisle
1897, Yellow Fever epidemic
1898, Gulfport incorporated
1898, Spanish American War
1899, Oct, Thirty telephones installed at Pass
1902, Hancock Bank opened Pass branch
1904, Elliot Henderson promoted land sales in Henderson Point and Pass Christian Iles
1904, Dunbar, Lopez, Dukate began seafood plant
1905, Town Library building purchased by Ladies's Library Association
1905, Long Beach incorporated
1908, Street Car line established to Biloxi
1908, First Electric Lights -- 132 installed
1911, St. Philomena's Catholic Church (now Mother of Mercy) dedicated
1912, 6 mph speed limit for motor vehicles
1912, City limits extended to Boisdore on west and present Long Beach on east
1912, Woodrow Wilson visited the Pass for the Winter on Christmas Day, stayed at Beaulieu
1915, June, Teddy Roosevelt visited the Pass as a guest of John Parker (former LA Governor)

The historical marker was donated by the Gulf Coast Chapter of the Daughters of the American Revolution and the Pass Christian Bicentennial Commission.

The Pass Christian Garden Club and the DAR chapter assisted in the restoration of the historic site following damages incurred by Hurricane Camille in 1969. E. Davis McCutchon, president of the Bicentennial Commission, was Master of Ceremonies. Jimmy Cutrell, minister of music for the First Baptist Church of Gulfport, was in charge of music. M. James Stevens, president of the Mississippi Coast Historical and Genealogical Society, was the featured speaker to memorialize Mrs. Butler.

After Camille, many of the numerous metal markers previously on display along U.S. Highway 90, were lost and have not been replaced. Some are still kept in the Municipal storage, while others have been permanently lost to theft. The Trinity Marker was lost for several years but was returned with some damage after being found.

A Camellia bush planted in front of the former Butler home still blooms on Scenic Drive. Just as the small cuts were brought to her home from Mount Vernon, the seeds of George and Martha Washington were also brought to the Gulf Coast and the Pass. Among some of the blossoms are Mrs. Lawrence Yarbrough and Mrs. Richard Cromwell.

Of significance is a set of fire-place tools originally belonging to George Washington. These tools were brought to the Pass by the mysterious Lulu Watt, mistress of the Villa Karma, who presented them to John Lang. These tongs and accompanying shovel remain with the Lang family.

Duel in the Pass

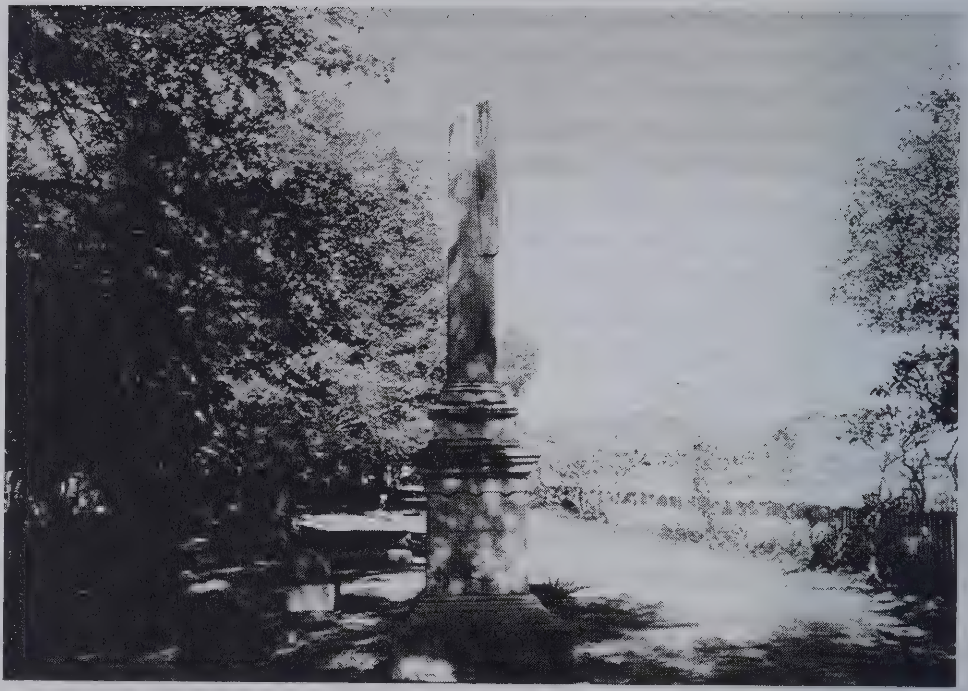
Dueling under the oaks in satisfying an "Affaire d'Honneur" was a natural part of Pass Christian's early history in keeping with a tradition which lasted for almost a hundred years. In fact the original *Dueling Oaks*, are actually some of the very same live oaks which still stand in the Pass Christian highschool yard.

From the silence of the ground in Live Oak Cemetery rises a pinnacle, broken near the top and shrouded overhead by a draped cloth. The monument to the last duel fought in Pass Christian which ended in vanquishing a man's heart, his soul and his body; is all that remains in cold, white, marble stoneware with the inscription below dedicated to Michael Cuddy.

Pass Christian – Significant Dates

1915, First Mardi Gras Parade
1915, Airplane landed at Oak street and the railroad at the playground
1915, The Lynn Castle Hotel burned down followed by the Magnolia Hotel (Miramar site) two weeks later
1915, Coast Hurricane
1917, Mexican Gulf Hotel burned down
1917, April, World War I
1917, First Fire Engine purchased
1918, Flu epidemic
1920, Garden Club organized
1921, Ferry service instituted at Bay from Henderson Point to Bay St. Louis
1923, Jun 13, Pass Chamber of Commerce organized
1924, Rotary Club chartered
1925, Japanese gardens built by R.S. Hecht
1926, Aug 7, First Deep Sea Fishing Rodeo, National Tarpon Tournament
1927, Grey Castle Hotel opened
1927, New Brick City Hall at Market Street
1928, Natural Gas was installed at the Pass
1928, Mar 28, Wooden Bay bridge opened to traffic
1929, Oct, Spanish Trail Motorcade from St. Augustine to San Diego arrived in the Pass
1929, stock market crash
1930, Pass Christian Carnival Association reorganized Mardi Gras
1930, Horace White donated land for City Park
1935, WPA projects started in the Pass
1937, First Spring Pilgrimage co-sponsored with New Orleans
1937, Jan 16, New Pass Christian High School formal opening
1937, Pass Yacht Club re-organized
1937, March 18, Skipperette Club organized with 26 members
1938, Knost Regatta organized
1938, Jaycee Chapter organized
1941, Dec 8, World War II
1942, Blackout curfew for duration of the War, utility poles painted white for night visibility
1942, Merchant Marines took over Inn-by-the-Sea at Henderson Point
1942, US Army took over Pine Hills Hotel complex at DeLisle
1943, segregation laws enacted in hotels and dining facilities

Pass Christian – Significant Dates
1943, Rhea Memorial Park given to the Trinity Church
1946, Feb 20, VFW chapter organized
1946, Wallace Walker promoted Henderson Point and Pass Christian Isles, purchased for back-taxes
1947, Jan 4, Memorial Park Playground dedicated
1947, Sep 19, Hurricane
1948, first parking meters, created contention between Mayor and Town Marshall
1950, Sand beach pumped in
1950, Garden Club reactivated
1952, Pass Christian Isle Golf Club began
1952, Oct 5, Miss America 1958, Mary Ann Mobley visits Pass
1953, July 26, PC Yacht Club purchased Canning Factory at Harbor location
1953, Aug 1, Four-lane concrete Bay bridge
1953, Nov 14, PC Isles Golf Club-House dedicated
1953, Dec 6, Coast Art Group held first meeting
1953, Dec 21, South lane of US Highway 90 opened
1954, Oct 17, Henderson Point/Heights Volun-teer Fire Dept - Fire Station dedicated
1955, Planning Commission created
1956, Pass Volunteer Fire Dept. chartered
1957, Aug 22, Memorial dedication to Yellow Fever clergy victims of 1867
1958, Feb 11, Knights of Columbus recieved Charter
1958, VFW acquired Fleitas Building for Headquarters
1958, Oct 7, Miss America - Mary Ann Mobley
1958, Dec 10, the first PC Chamber of Commerce Building dedicated at East Harbor
1961, May 25, Coast Guard Flotilla recieved Charter
1962, Vietnam War
1963, St Joseph's became St Paul's School
1964, May 4, St Paul Elementary School dedicated
1965, Miramar Nursing Lodge opened
1965, US World & News proclaimed 5-mile stretch of Scenic/Hwy90 third wealthiest street in the Nation, behind Wall St & Palm Beach, FL
1965, Sep 9, Hurricane Betsy



"In Memory of Michael Cuddy
a native of the County of Kilkenny, Ireland
and for many years
a highly respected merchant of New Orleans.
Died May 21st, 1856, aged 42 years."

It happened on May 22, 1856 pursuant to a volatile meeting of two businessmen from New Orleans. That following morning at half-past 7 a.m., the altercation resumed between E.W. Estlie of the firm of Estlie, Lee & Co. on Canal Street and M. Cuddy of Cuddy, Brown, & Co. on Camp Street. Each man had selected their "seconds", who earlier that morning went to the local militia armory to select dueling pistols, which they each carefully wrapped in napkins.

The pistols were then placed in the hands of each combatant, and ten paces were counted off slowly.

At the first firing, Estlie was slightly wounded, but with the second firing, Estlie's bullet was the messenger of death to his antagonist. Michael Cuddy never breathed again after receiving the ball. Now, only the pinnacle stands, casting its shadow upon the cold, damp church-yard. A towering pinnacle, with shorn off peak, makes a statement even today. Cuddy's life was interrupted and the marble monument is covered with a mantle of mystery.

On the evening before the duel, there was a gala celebration honoring debutantes at a "coming out" cotillion. The orchestra played delightful waltzes and the polkas were quite merry. Michael Cuddy had just finished cavorting on the dance floor with a young debutante of age 15 years. Estlie, having too many drinks, approached the young damsel.

This was the setting which resulted in a disturbance whereupon, both of the young men were asked to leave.

Japanese Gardens

Visits to the Middlegate Japanese Gardens included a tour through an authentic Japanese home resplendent in Oriental majesty. The sojourn was further complemented by being entertained in the adjacent Tea house and waterfall, which was offset by a beautiful sunken garden. By taking the path along the *Bamboo Walk*, the visitor was confronted by a costumed attendant pulling an imported Japanese jinricksha.

Ornamental lanterns were attached to cherry trees and wisteria vines. Everywhere below, one would find strategically located bronze or stone lilliputian monuments representing buddhist shrines. Also, there were granite pagodas, and century old images of oriental idols, and typically and faithfully reproduced Japanese household nymphs.

Perhaps the most interesting feature of the gardens was the gigantic bronze statue of Buddha which was imported from the famous gardens of the great Daibutsu in Kamakura, Japan. This Buddha still remains and is recognized as one of the largest in the world as it sits majestically upon a 20 foot pedestal.

The visit was not complete without walking across the *Wishing Bridge* to peek into the shaded stream below in order to perceive the multitude of white and gold oriental carp. And nearby, one could sit by the *Pagoda Fountain* surrounded by a multitude of flowers which permeated magical scents which teased and lulled the guest into moods of meditative ambience.

Visitors were left facinated with a lasting impression, but even moreso were those who sustain a penchant for having a true garden spirit and a love for exotic beauty.

The Japanese Gardens were developed by Mr. and Mrs. Rudolph Hecht of New Orleans. They developed their love for Japanese culture during their many visits to the Land of the Rising Sun and brought it home to their "Middlegate" estate at 520 West Scenic

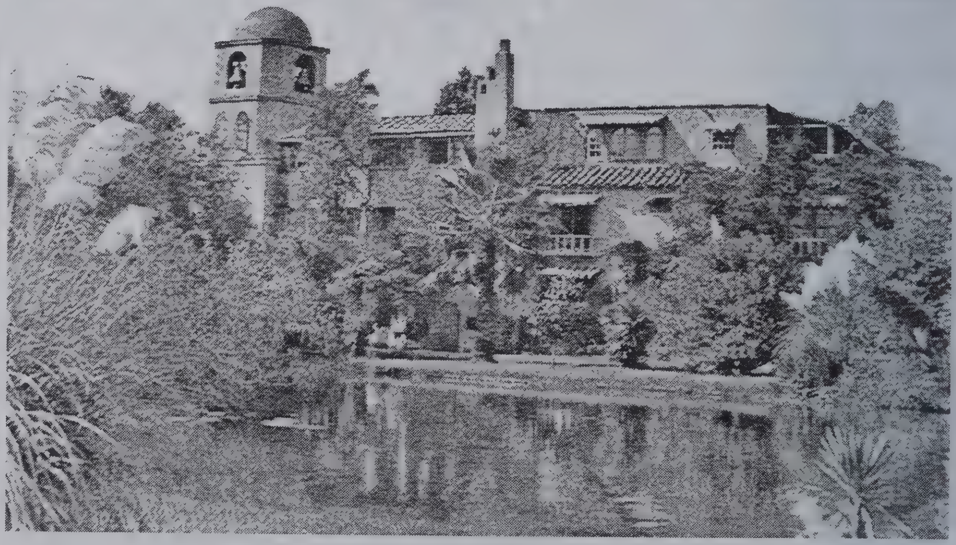
Drive in Pass Christian. Mr. Hecht was also one of the founders of the International House in New Orleans.

The majestic gardens were designed to contain all of the traditional features of an original world famous Japanese garden with exquisite subtleties and delicate beauty. It was replete with tall cryptomerias, giant bamboo,dwarfed trees, azaleas, camelias, japonicas, and other flowering shrubs, all within the limited space of a few acres.

Remnants of these gardens can still be sited from Second Street between Clarence Avenue and Pine Street. Unfortunately, the original charm of the famous gardens was destroyed by the ravishes of Camille.

Inn by the Sea

The Inn-by-the-Sea was a delightful Hotel surrounded by cottages among the tall pines and moss-hung live oaks basking beside the shores of the Gulf at Henderson Point. It was placed in the center of a beautifully landscaped 75-acre park fronting a private white-silver sand beach extending from the very edge of the patio to the emerald waters of the Gulf of Mexico. The very atmosphere of the Inn was charged with romantic intrigue of the *Spanish Main*, although promising all the creature comforts of the day in catering to the slightest wish of the vacationing family.



The Inn by the Sea
The 75-acre park had a full complex of buildings which served to shelter and entertain its many guests over the years. Exotic fowl with colorful plumed feathers roamed the gardens as well as imported tamed animals.

The former owners of the Inn, Mr. and Mrs. I. T. Rhea, had once reflected that, "to sit on the beach, to see the magnificent sunset, to hear the waves splash, and to reap the many natural amenities, such as: The bugle birds in the patio with their gold and black plumage, white cockatoos, parrots, and beautiful macaws, or going on a picnic in the piney woods, or to watch the glorious sunshine and to feel and taste the tang of salt air -- who could not forget their cares? Or to sail on the *Pussy Cat* or the *Queen of the Fleet*, or to take a cruise on the *Oneida* to the barrier islands and to take a plunge into the Gulf."

This was in 1920 before the Bay bridge was built. The ferry was still operating between the town of Bay St. Louis and the Point. Like the many other old hotels of the Pass, the "Big Depression" of the 30's made its toll.

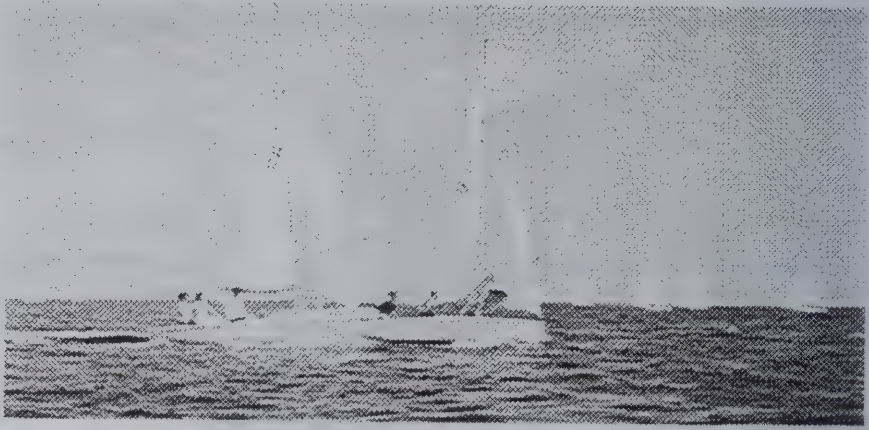
With World War II, the Inn was taken over by the Merchant Marines as a training academy.

That same area now facilitates the $13,000,000 Gulfshore Baptist Assembly Mission. Since its groundbreaking ceremonies in 1972, Baptists from all over the country visit the educational and religious retreat. In addition to a large auditorium and conference facility, extensive dormitories house hundreds of students with separate living quarters for counselors.

Captain John McDonald
He skippered the **Queen of the Fleet** and is seen below next to a *Jew Fish* or sea-bass he caught at Tarpon Hole. It hung more than eight feet long and weighed 440 pounds.

Southern Yachting at Pass Christian

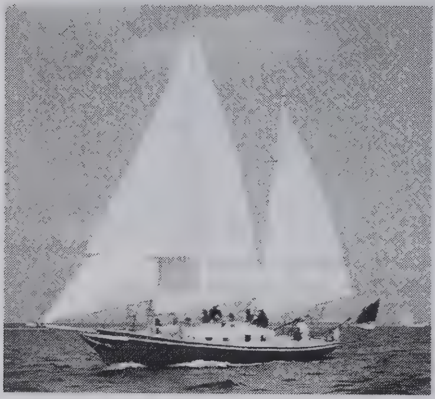
By 1830, New Orleans had discovered the Gulf Coast. Small family-owned hotels and boarding houses sprang up and elaborate homes were built. Steamboats plied the coast from Mobile to New Orleans, making scheduled stops at the small towns. . . . Tourism was born!



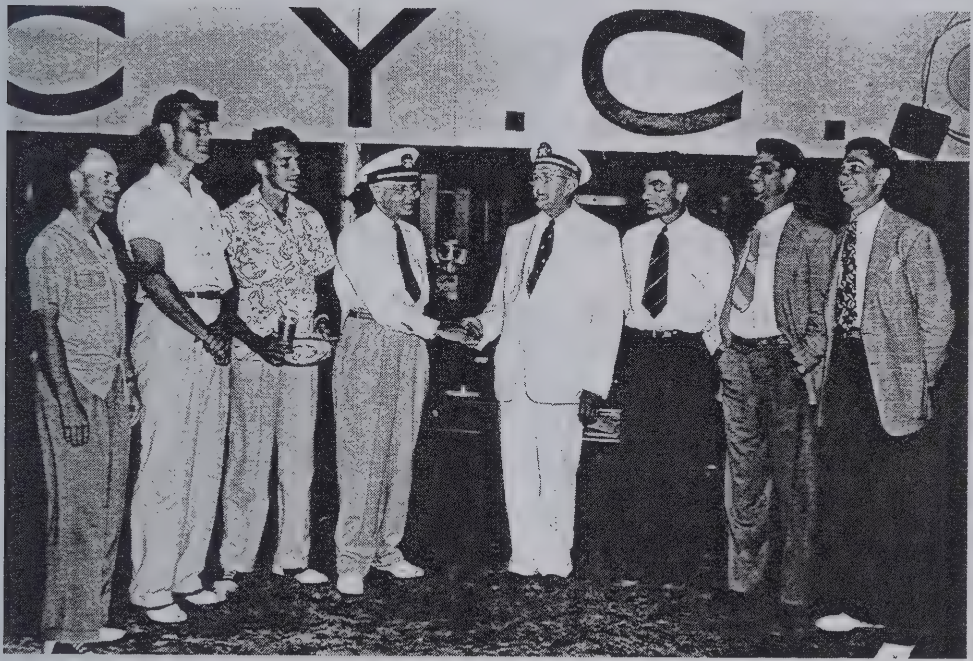
When Pass Christian was incorporated in 1838, it was already famous for its gallant and gracious charm and the courteous service given to its summer guests and residents. That was the era when the "Pass" had nearly a hundred private piers jutting out a thousand feet into the Sound. The Pass Christian Hotel, having been built in 1831, was taken over by the then famous and affable R. H. Montgomery, who was its host from 1847 to 1855 and under whose adroit maneuvering the Southern Yacht Club was organized within its portals in 1849.

Yachting in the South was born at Pass Christian. The first regatta promoted by R.H. Montgomery, manager of the Pass Christian Hotel, was held on July 21, 1849. Citing a New Orleans' news article from the "Crescent" on that date, "*It was a gala day at the Pass. The quiet harbor was thronged with boats, gay with streamers, and manned by athletic crews...*" Responding to the challenge were a dozen contestants. The Stingaree Social Club of New Orleans had acquired a new cabin sloop, resulting in their qualifying for the 25 mile race. Twelve sailboats, representing as many towns, had lined up at the start of the triangular course. Although the Stingarees lost, coming in third, the *Eliza Riddle* was christened.

Pass Christian
Birthplace of Southern Yachting
Many regattas have been held in the Mississippi Sound off the shores of Pass Christian. Besides the local races, is the world famous Lipton Regatta which celebrated its 75th Anniversary at the PCYC in 1994, in commemoration of its Sportsman founder, Sir Thomas Lipton. *(Photo Courtesy Bill Kidd)*



The *Flirt* of Biloxi won the silver pitcher, and the *Anna* of the "Pass" finished second. All had a wonderful time, and they ended the evening by organizing the Southern Regatta Club with Pass Christian as headquarters. The enthusiasm resulted in officers being elected the following summer, with Tom S. Dabney as its first president. The Southern Yacht Club of New Orleans originated from members of this association.



Former Mayor Sam Heaslip continued this sport in the Pass. As a past Commodore of the Southern Yacht Club of New Orleans and an early owner and operator of the Mexican Gulf Hotel, he helped organize the current Pass Christian Yacht Club in 1893. Joining with four other regional clubs, the Southern Gulf Coast Yachting Association was formed in 1901 and reorganized in 1920 as the Gulf Yachting Association. The first Pass Christian Yacht Club quarters was destroyed by the Hurricane of 1915.

The Club sponsored sail racing in the Sound as well as motor boat racing in Bayou Portage. Following the depression years, in 1937 the down-sized Club was reorganized by a group of local citizens meeting at the old red school house on Scenic Drive and Hiern Avenue. Bernard Knost was elected Commodore. The newly formed Skipperette Club voted Mrs. Peggy Gause as its Commodore. In 1938, the Knost Regatta for female skippers came into existence, honoring Bernard Knost, and has since continued as an annual event of the Pass Christian Yacht Club.

PCYC COMMODORES
1893, Com Sam F. Heaslip
Com John T. McDonald
Com Bernard Chotard
1928, Com Luther H. Barksdale
1929, Com J.M. Terrell
1932, Com Henry Roux
1933, Com Leo McDermott
1934, Com Henry Roux
1935, Com Henry Roux
1937, Com Bernard L. Knost
1938, Com Bernard L. Knost
1939, Com Fred A. Sutter
1940, Com Fred A. Sutter
1941, Com Cary E. Spence
1942, Com Jack E. Kerrigan
1943, Com Jack E. Kerrigan
1944, Com J.W. Terrell
1945, Com J.W. Terrell
1947, Com Charles B. Merrick
1948, Com Charles B. Merrick
1949, Com J.W. Terrell
1950, Com J.W. Terrell
1951, Com Arthur B. Tipping
1952, Com Arthur B. Tipping
1953, Com Jack E. Kerrigan
1954, Com Jack E. Kerrigan
1955, Com J. Barkley Witherspoon
1956, Com J. Barkley Witherspoon
1957, Com J.W. Terrell
1958, Com J.W. Terrell
1959, Com Burris Wood
1960, Com Burris Wood
1961, Com Gordon Bishop
1962, Com Gordon Bishop
1963, Com Wm. Perry Brown
1964, Com Wm. Perry Brown
1965, Com H.H. Hillyer
1966, Com H.H. Hillyer
1967, Com George W. Byrne, M.D.
1968, Com George E. Morse
1969, Com Charles Pearson
1970, Com Fernand J. Milhas
1971, Com John V. Dugan III
1972, Com Sydney Ellis, Jr.
1973, Com Michael S. Rafferty
1974, Com Elmer H. Scott
1975, Com Michael S. Rafferty
1976, Com Byron W. Stinson
1977, Com Abner Northrop, Jr.
1978, Com C.D. Taylor, Jr.
1978, Com Byron W. Stinson
1979, Com Steve McNair, Jr

1980, Com Steve McNair, Jr
1981, Com Donald M. Rogers
1982, Com William O. Rainnie
1983, Com Thomas C. Shellnut
1984, Com C. Randall Jones
1985, Com Donald D. Doyle
1986, Com Denby Garrison
1987, Com A.K. Northrop, Jr.
1988, Com James A. Williams
1989, Com Oliver S. Montagnet, Jr.
1990, Com Oliver S. Montagnet, Jr.
1991, Com William A Peneguy
1992, Com Jerry Pilcher
1993, Com Frank Allen
1994, Com Frnak Allen
1995, Com Shelly Colleen
1996, Com Harry Hammett
1997, Com Harry Hammett

Property was purchased south of Scenic Drive between Hiern Avenue and Market Street for a new clubhouse. The hurricane of 1947 caused some damages to it, followed by an expropriation in 1953 by the Mississippi Highway Department to build U.S. Highway 90.

On July 26, 1953, the Club celebrated its new location on the peninsula, jutting into the Gulf from the foot of Market Street. The man-made peninsula originated from previous oyster canneries which had dumped oyster shells for many years. A quonset hut, once used by the old Dunbar-Dukate canning company, was renovated into new quarters for the Yacht Club. In June of 1958, the Club negotiated a property and lease exchange with the City administration.

Then came August of 1969, when the old *Quonset Hut* was destroyed by Hurricane Camille, resulting in a temporary clubhouse being established in the then vacant Crescent Hotel (The Harbour Inn).

Ribbon cutting for the present Club took place on December 16, 1971. Its first addition took place in 1975 and expanded, renovated, and redecorated In 1987. Again, in '95 and '96, extensive renovations were made to the building and its docks. PCYC also sports a four-lane regulation swimming pool measuring 35 x 82 foot.

Lucien Piernas
Lucien worked the bars of the Gulf Club and the Yacht Club for many years. Until his retirement, he also was seen helping out at private house parties as the favorite bartender of the Pass.

Pass Christian Municipal Harbor

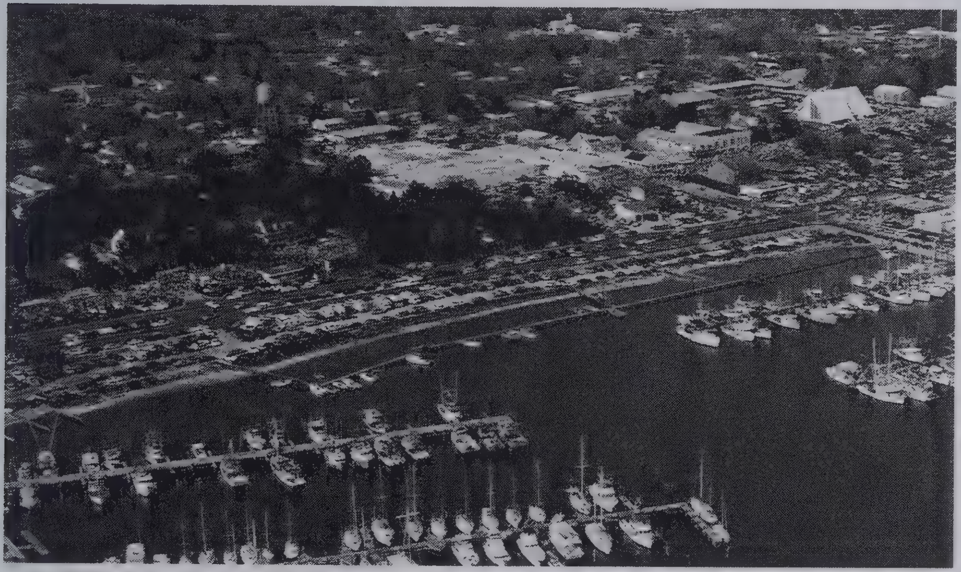
The water passage in the Sound has been called Pass Christian since the mid 1800s when Nicholas Christian Ladner settled at Cat Island. Prior to that it was called "*Passe aux Huitres*" by the early French explorers. Translation for the offshore "pass" was suitably named the "Oyster Pass". For hundreds of years, the numerous oyster reefs afforded a source of supply to the whole coastal region. In 1902, a Dunbar-Dukate seafood plant was built at the present site of the Pass Christian Yacht Club.

Access to the Factory was by way of a 1000 foot length wharf, jetting from shore to plant atop pilings. At night, the smaller commercial boats would tie-up to each other creating "raft-docks" anchored to the wharf. This was the first semblance of a harbor before the mud flats became dredged.

The Municipal Harbor was finally formalized in 1956 with the creation of a Harbor Commission in response to a new 1 mill revenue enactment established by the Harrison County Supervisors. Supporting the Commission was a Harbor Advisory Committee composed of representatives of the Yacht Club, fishers and packers.

In 1958, an 11-foot high, 350-foot long, concrete, breakwater wall was constructed into the Sound by the T.L. James Company. There are only two such concrete harbor walls in the World, the other is in Japan.

The Big Wall
The concrete breakwater serves to protect the more than 300 boats housed in the harbor as well as providing a ramp to fish from and to view the Mississippi Sound.



During the 60s, more rip-rap was dumped into the Sound, followed by dredging, which provided space for more piers and berths.

Following major repairs from "*Camille*" damages, the Pass Christian Municipal Harbor today is the most picturesque marina along the entire coast. Through matching funds programs, the City officials have coordinated with the "Harbor Master Plan" in offering a beautiful recreation area which is currently under renewed development with the completion of a children's park. The playground area will be complete with swings, see-saws, merry-go-rounds, barbecue-pits and three picnic shelters. Also provided are three drive-through parking areas surrounding the north end and east and west sides of the harbor. Spaces provide for a total of 220 automobiles and 100 vehicles with boat trailers, which have easy access to two boat ramps.

Safe Harbor
The serenity of the Marina is only disturbed by the small wakes made by cruising boats. Pictured is a Vietnamese trawler with a high bow.

Almost 1000 linear feet of public fishing is permitted on the two breakwalls, in addition to a sheltered fishing pavilion above piling. The Harbor consists of seven piers, four are assigned for pleasure craft and three for commercial vessels. There are 346 slips ranging in berth sizes from 31-feet to 84-feet, in addition to a skiff-pier providing 20 tie-ups. Services include, water, electricity, showers, restrooms, and a bait and fuel station. A vessel pump-out station is also available.

Justin J. Lassabe, Harbor Master, has assisted in the design of the new two-story Harbor Master office building which will provides a lower level public restroom facility.

On the eastern side, the Pass Christian Yacht Club is located at the site of the former Dunbar-Dukate Cannery and has its own parking area, boat launch and a private pier for 20 boats. Also, the city has provided space for a Department of Marine Resources field office. The combination of city, county, private and commercial sharing in the area is well balanced and favorably harmonious.

One of the famous festival events along the coast has been held at the Pass Christian Harbor. "Celebrate the Gulf" provides marine oriented educational exhibits and activities primarily focused for school children. Thousands of spectators participate at this festival event as well as the annual "Blessings of the Fleet".

Pass Oyster Reefs

The Pass Christian group of productive oyster beds have historically been documented on maps since D'Iberville and Bienville chartered these waters in 1699. Early maps of the area refer to the reefs and batures as *Passe aux Huîtres* (Oyster Pass).

There are nine principal reefs comprising an area of about twenty square miles. This group of reefs are the most important in the state, both in production and acreage. During the oyster seasons, as many as 150 fishing boats and tonging skiffs can be seen just off shore.

Some of major reefs in the Pass group are: the Pass Christian Tonging Reef, which is situated due south of the town from which it derives its name, and extends for a distance of one and one-half miles off shore. Its area is about one and one-half square miles.

Further west are the Henderson Point and Calico reefs which are positioned from one to two miles south of Henderson Point. The foundation of these reefs is of sticky mud and sand, with large quantities of shell fragments. Such a mixture has formed a firm foundation for the reef, and at the same time provides a considerable quantity of natural cultch. The combined areas of these reefs amount to about one square mile. Oysters taken from these reefs are superior to those taken from the Pass Christian Tonging Reef. Clustering is much less evident, and the oysters are of much better shape.

Pass Marianne Reef is nearly circular in form. It is an area of about two and one-half square miles. In years past, the Pass Marianne Lighthouse was located approximately in the center of the reef. The conditions of this reef are essentially the same as those found at the Square Handkerchief Reef.

Unloading at the Wharf

Oystermen would dredge the reefs and pile the oysters aboard their craft 'til nearly falling off the sides. Aside the Cannery wharf, the oysters were loaded onto metal bins which were shuttled by rail into the factory or to waiting seafood buyers.

The Lighthouses

Pass Christian and Cat Island each had lighthouses constructed in 1831. Ashore at the "Pass", one lighthouse was located at present day City Hall. For much of the beacon's existence, the Keeper from 1844 to 1861 was Miss C. A. Hiern. It was built atop a shoreline ridge, which was fourteen feet above seaa level. The light tower was forty-two feet above high water and visible for twelve miles from ships passing in the Gulf. As all the other lights along the Coast, it too, was shut down during the Civil War. Following several failing attempts by city officials to cut down the privately owned trees obscuring sea vision, its discontinuance was ordered in 1882. This resulted in the property with the Light and the Keeper's residence being sold at auction, and soon afterwards dismantled.

At Cat Island, Juan Cuevas was the first lighthouse keeper and one of his eleven children, Ramon, followed his footsteps as Lightkeeper. A descendant, Franklin J. Cuevas, reported that upon the death of interim Lightkeeper Riley in 1839, Ramon not only took over the Lighthouse, but also Riley's Widow as his new bride. The Cat Island lighthouse was temporarily discontinued due to hurricane damages in 1860 and later shut-down orders were issued by the Confederates in 1861. Since the Lighthouses of the Mississippi Sound, including the waterways into Lake Borgne in Louisiana, were all constructed to meet the same specifications, components from the Cat Island lighthouse were sent out to replace broken parts in other lighthouses. Following the Civil War, the lighthouse was reconstructed on piling. During the years following 1900, the piling had to be shored up with rip-rap to secure its foundation from continued storm-wave action.

Both the Cat and the Pass lights were built along the same design, with white brick towers and with fourth-order lens visible for at least 12 miles. For a little more than fifty years, the lighthouse beacons served as illumination, reaching out radiantly beckoning to mariners and tourists arriving by way of the Gulf.

As reported by M. James Stevens, "The Pass Christian Light was the first Lighthouse erected on the Mississippi Coast mainland. Cat Island Light was built at the same time in 1831. Round Island Light was built in 1833. Biloxi Lighthouse was built in 1848, Ship Island in 1853, Pascagoula in 1854."

Pass Christian – Significant Dates

1967, Gus Stevens Restaurant at Henderson Point burned down
1969, Mar 17, First St. Patrick's Day Parade
1969, Aug 17, Hurricane Camille
1971, Jan 16, Jazz Funeral for Captain John Handy
1971, New Yacht Club dedicated
1971, Oct, Friends of the Library organized (chartered in 1972)
1971, Oct 21, World Heavyweight Champion Joe Louis visited
1971, Nov 14, Trinity Episcopal Church consecration ceremonies
1972, Third Catholic Parish Church dedicated
1972, Annie's Restaurant at the Point burned
1973, June, New Public Library opened
1973, Chamber of Commerce opened new building office at West Harbor
1974, Oct 27, Trinity Episcopal Church celebrated 125th Anniversary
1975, PC Historical Society reorganized
1975, St. Paul Catholic Church recieved the Lady of Guadelupe statue
1976, Jan 9, Bicentennial Celebrations, Re-enactment pageantry
1976, Jul 1, Groundbreaking for Baptist Assembly Complex at Henderson Point
1976, Jul 4, Bicentennial Celebrations at War Memorial
1977, Annual St Paul Seafood Festival reorganized
1981, Ter Chemicals, Inc, to opened
1981, Champion Shipyards, Inc added to Industrial Seaway
1982, Oct 14, Dupont Plant 3rd Anniversary visited by Gov. William Winter
1982, Historic Preservation Ordinance passed
1983, Sep 20, Kittiwake Baptist Church ground breaking services held
1995, First PCYC Female Commodore -- Shelly Colleen
1995, First VFW Female Commander -- Nita Favre
1995, St. Patrick's Day Parade re-organized
1995, Shopping Center opened at Henderson Avenue and Hwy 90
1996, Land purchase of Highway property fronting St. Paul Catholic Church
1997, Jubilee-3 Year for St. Paul Parish
1999, Tricentennial Celebrations

The Town Library

The "Town Library" was the first established library along the Coast between Mobile and New Orleans. It was first opened by the "Ladies' of the Town Library Association on February 21, 1893. The first president of the Association, Miss Isabelle Bowman Finley, promoted the beginning of the library by donating much of her own large library. Initially she would bring her books and leave them at the sundries store operated by her Aunt Carrie, where people would borrow them. Some of the ladies in the town would help out in keeping up with the books. It grew and grew and there got to be enough business that they organized it into a subscription library in 1905 and the first officers were elected.

The Library was initially supported by donations and a few bequests and fund raising "Tag Days", when young girls would sell the tags for 25 cents to the Tourists. It was one of the last subscription libraries in the country. A Subscription sold for $1.50 a year.

The quaint cottage as built in 1849, is located at 221 East Scenic Drive. It was purchased in 1905 and later moved rearward approximately 30 feet. Many folks pass by it not even knowing that it was still in operation until 1996 when the volunteer Librarian, Miss Catherine James, died. This wonderful lady kept the doors open providing reading literature to citizens in "The Pass" as well as many tourists and locals from other parts of the Coast. The Town Library preserved an atmosphere of hospitality famous to Mississippi, which was appreciated by visitors and newcomers alike. Most of the books on the shelves have been donated over the years by local citizenry.

Miss Catherine James,
Librarian, Extraordinair

Pass Christian Historical Society

The Pass Christian Historical Society was incorporated in April of 1966 with the intention of purchasing the former *Dixie White House*, which was destroyed by Camille. The Society's first president was William Wiegand who established a goal to raise $100,000 through pledges, dues, and contributions in making the *Dixie White House* a community asset in attracting tourists.

In 1973, the Mississippi Coast Historical and Genealogical Society held a meeting to establish a forum for a series of talks to be offered by local history buffs who had made serious efforts in establishing the history of Pass Christian.

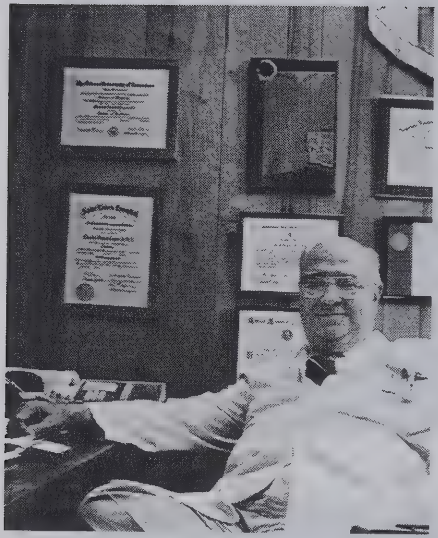
A renewal of interest took place in 1975 with the formulation of the Bicentennial celebrations for the following year. Mrs. John Pritchard served as President and Dr. C.D. Taylor took the helm in 1976 launching an ambitious program which has continued ever since.

These same innovators are credited with the evaluation and preservation of cultural resources which brought about the creation of the Mayor's Advisory Committee on Historic Preservation which resulted in the passage of the Preservation Ordinance in 1977 establishing control guidelines on buildings older than 50 years.

With continued stimulation, an invitation to the Mississippi Department of Archives and History encouraged an historic site survey of more than 450 homes in the Pass. This established the criteria for Pass Christian's Historic District and its induction into the National Register of Historic Places with final acceptance in 1979.

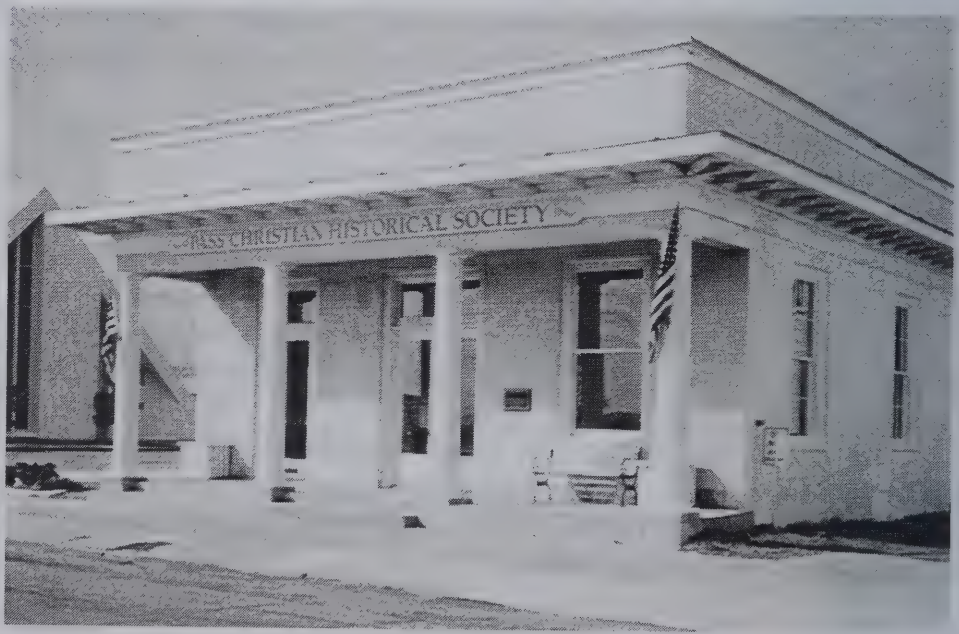
With the ever increasing trend towards preservation, the Historical Society acquired the Lang Building, (the former *Pass Christian Bank* of 1905) as its official meeting place as well as housing and storing historical archives. A steady accumulation of scrapbooks, photographs, post-cards, newspapers, municipal minutes, audio tapes with transcriptions and other dated material have been collected and stored in the concrete vault.

Following several years of continued restoration and beautification of the property, an award of merit was presented in 1995. The presentation was made by the Mississippi Heritage Trust and the Mississippi Historical Society during the term of office of former President C. Randall Jones.



Dr. C.D. Taylor
A Pass activist who helped promote the values of restoring and preserving the cultural history and the traditional homes of the Pass.

Bill Kidd
An activist in many Pass Christian organizations, events, and causes, Bill Kidd will be remembered for his contributions to local history and heritage as Editor of the *Pass Christian Review*, a monthly magazine.



The Society serves as the Lighthouse and Watchtower to inhibit further instances of demolition by renovation and the prevention of any further intrusions and non-conforming building structures in Pass Christian and along Scenic Drive and the Beach Avenues in particular.

Monthly meetings present stimulating speakers and educational forums of historic significance and on the social side, a festive annual Christmas membership gathering is held in one of the estate cottages on Scenic Drive.

The Society is also the sponsor for the annual Pass Christian *Historic Tour of Homes*. With the graciousness of many good citizens, these beautiful homesteads are "opened" for public viewing and "tea service". This special endeavor also calls upon many wonderful volunteers to participate in these guided tours. This once a year opportunity affords not only local residents, but tourists from all over the Coast and other States to view the treasures of Pass Christian's Historic ambiance.

Dr. C.D. Taylor in full pageantry mimicking Dr. Flood aboard the *Alligator* as he raised the American Flag along Mississippi's Gulf Coast in 1811. *The 1976 Bicentennial Celebrations in Pass Christian.*

Museé Bourdin

There has been a genuine increased interest by residents to stop by the *Museé Bourdin* (Bourdin Brothers Plumbing) to drop off a photo or some archival relic. This community support re-energizes Billy Bourdin's efforts to continue building the archives with his dedicated research and continued categorizing of gathered information. The back room of the Plumbing office is stocked full with historical folios on more than a hundred and fifty special interest categories. And the photo files exhibited by Bourdin are unequalled.

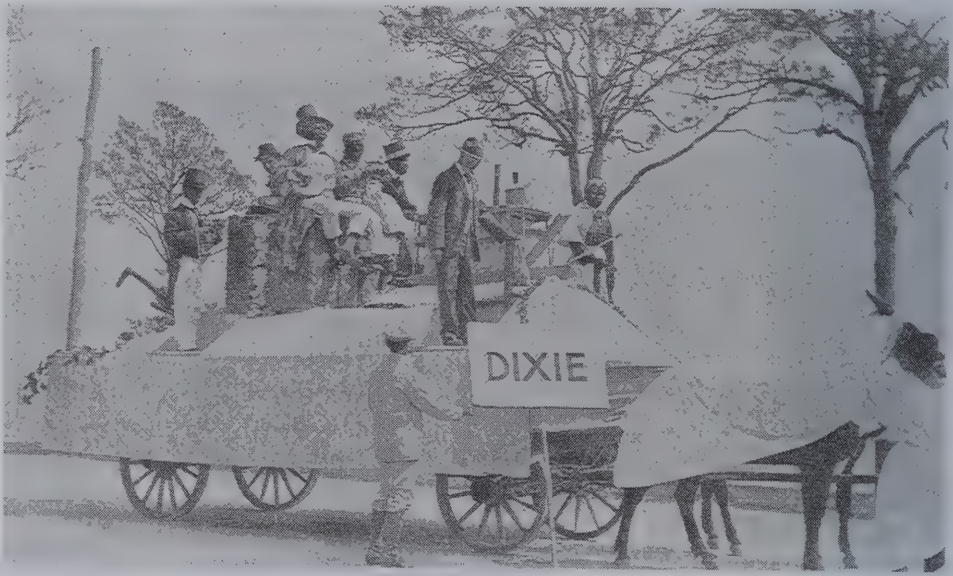
Billy Bourdin
During the year of 1996, Billy Bourdin's efforts to maintain and collect historical documents and artifacts were properly acknowledged. He received recognitions from the Mississippi and Pass Christian Historical Societies, the Chamber of Commerce, and the local newspapers, magazines and television. Applauding Billy, to his right is Beth Carriere, Director of Hancock Tourism and George Watson, Board member of the Harrison Tourism Commission.

Mardi Gras - Pass Christian

Starting in 1831, Mardi Gras Balls in Pass Christian were held in the coast's finest and most elegant hotel, the *Pass Christian.* After the Civil War, the Mexican Gulf Hotel hosted many Balls during the late 1800s and early 1900s. These first Balls were primarily for hotel guests and invited locals who also lived in New Orleans and upstate. Local townsfolk started having Mardi Gras Balls at the site of the present VFW building which then was owned by the Chapotels. In later years, the festivities were held at the second floor hall of the Northrop building, the site of present-day Hancock Bank. While the women dressed in customary evening gowns, the men dressed as *Dominoes* wearing long black robes with a peaked, cone-shaped black hat and remained masked until midnight.

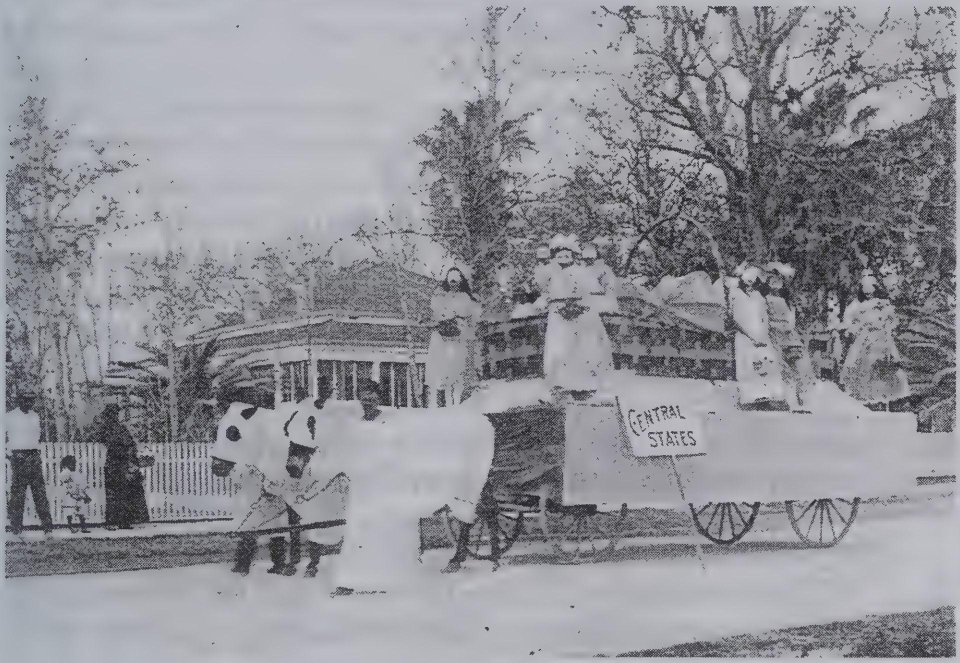
As in the case of the street celebrations of Mobile and New Orleans, parades started a number of years later. In 1913 a local group of men organized a carnival association and introduced its first parade in 1914. Since it was an organization composed solely of men, their first intention was to dress a man as its Queen. However, at the last moment the male Queen backed out and the title was given to a lady. Louis Martin was the first King Arthur with Miss Elie Courtenay reigning as his Queen. Nevertheless, the men selected as first Maids honored themselves in full regalia.

And the Band Played on
Even the first Mardi Gras parades in the Pass had their musical performers. Riding the wagon are "Mr. Jim" Farrell and his "minstrels".



The parade was held on Mardi Gas Day, Shrove Tuesday, and the Ball was held the same night. Following the King's royal float were those representing regions of the United States. The dukes rode on horseback as the band entertained atop its own float as they paraded along Beach Avenue from Menge to Market Avenue and returned to Fleitas Avenue by way of Second Street.

Julius Hayden was hailed as King in 1915 along with his Queen, Miss Forrest Lee Springs. In 1916, King Arthur III was Albert Andresen accompanied by Queen Thelma Hanson.



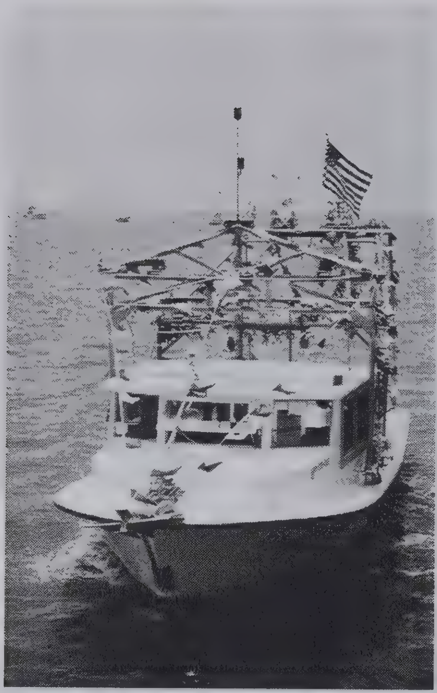
Mule Team
Mule drawn carts formed the base of the floats ridden in 1914, 1915 and 1916. The den for these floats was located at Fleitas and Second Streets.

With the onset of World War I, the Pass Christian Mardi Gras celebrations were discontinued until 1930, when a group of ladies decided to have a Carnival ball on Mardi Gras night as a school benefit. Headed by the Knosts and the Langs, Bernard Knost was selected as King Christian with Miss Marie Bertrand as his Queen.

Thus began the Mercy Carnival named for the Sisters of Mercy. Its first Ball was held in a large skating rink tent with its entranceway on Davis Avenue on the former site of the Mexican Gulf Hotel. These were the beginnings of the St. Paul Carnival Association which produces the most highly regarded and most festive Mardi Gras parade on the Gulf Coast.

The First Royal Majesties
For the year 1914, King Arthur I was Louis Martin and his Queen was Miss Ellen Courtenay.

Blessing of the Fleet



Fleet Blessings of the Shrimp Boats
Father Ron Herzog and Rev. Bill Buice honoring past fishermen and Blessing the passing Fleet.

"For the first time in the history of fishing here, the shrimp fleet will be blessed Sunday by Father Hayes, who recently was appointed to take the place of Father Leech. At this writing about 75 trawlers are here, many more are expected before Sunday. On account of the large number of boats it is presumed Father Hayes will bless them as a group however, this has not been fully decided.

Representatives of the press and photographers will be there to write of and depict this colorful event. Although only very short notice has been given the public a large crowd is expected." This was reported in the Tarpon-Beacon August 7, 1937.

The Blessings continued for about 20 years thereafter, however, becoming infrequent during the next 20 years. The Pass Christian Chamber of Commerce revived the traditional observance in 1977 becoming its principle sponsor. Chief-of-Police Ed Alley took the helm as its chairman and rounded up over thirty boats to participate. In the year following, he promoted the first Queen of the Fleet contest inviting every young damsel of Harrison County to submit their picture for the competition. The Chief corralled over a hundred boats to enter and set aside part of the area for a street dance. He also promoted 1400 pounds of free seafood. The Rev. Joseph Howze, Bishop of Biloxi, assisted by Father John O'Brien of St. Paul's Church, administered the blessings.

In 1985 the current custom of selecting King Fisherman and Queen Fisherette was initiated. With the opening of the brown shrimp season, the traditional spiritual blessings are rendered for a good season's catch and for the safety of the fishermen. Rev. Bronson Bryant of Trinity Episcopal Church, in 1985, stated, "It's one way of praising God's holy name in a very general way. Some may never go to church and this is where they get close to God."

Rev. Father Ron Herzog of St. Paul's Church, in 1987, stated, "Death is a sobering thought and the fishermen who face life-threatening situations want to believe a higher authority will intervene. The blessing cements their faith. The sea is so big, and the fisherman's boat is so small."

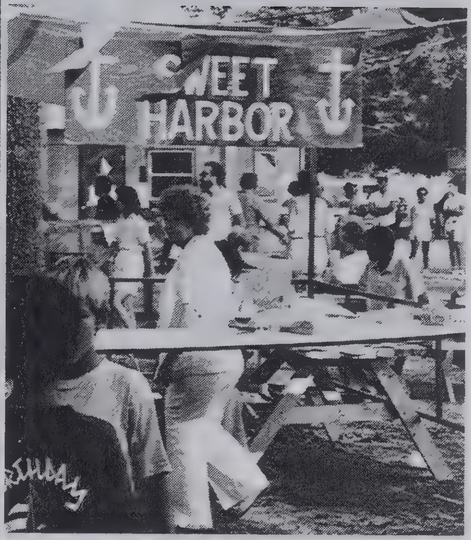
Baxter Jones initiated the ceremony of tossing a wreath into the waters in bereavement for all souls lost at sea. As a retired Navy man, this is a not only a natural custom, but an essential Naval courtesy. Incidentally, the First Deep Sea Rodeo on the Gulf Coast was held in Pass Christian in 1925.

Pass Christian Seafood Festivals

Following many years of annual Bazaars as fund-raisers for St. Paul's Parochial-Elementary School, a three-day week-end was announced for the 1977 Seafood Festival. Festival chairman Russell Ringer announced that Seafood would be served at the War Memorial Park for "take out" or "eat-in". Filling other positions were: Sam Armato, Co-chairman; Ben Carrubba, Treasurer; and Dave McCutchon, Publicity chairman.

Governor Cliff Finch issued an official proclamation declaring the week-end as "The First Annual Coast Seafood Festival Week-End" as Barbara Davis was crowned Seafood Festival Queen by Mayor Zach Anthony. Scenic Drive was closed to street dancing, while adult and kiddie games included cast net throwing, boy's softball tournaments, and a baby contest.

Food served; consisted of gumbo, boiled shrimp and crabs, fresh fried mullet, hamburgers, barbecued chicken, watermelon, cakes, and candies. An Arts and Crafts exhibit was presented by the Mississippi Gulf Coast Craftsmen's Guild. Music entertainment was provided by the Air Force Band and Barbara Davis was crowned the first Seafood Festival Queen.

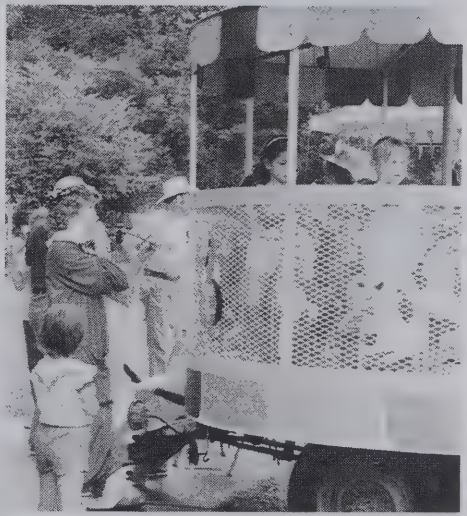


In 1979, the U.S. Navy Steel Band, with twenty-three, specially designed 55-gallon oil drums were used to play calypso music.

Other attractions, included, Diedre and Kasim performing as Mid-East belly dancers; and the first annual Tennis Tournament was introduced.

In 1983, the 5000 meter run and 1-mile run were added; and by 1986, food varieties included stuffed-crabs, seafood dinners, po-boys, and Tom Anthony's special gumbo. Live entertainment included Keesler's "Blue Edition" concert band and the First sand sculpture contest. Creole Jambalaya was savored in '89 while 22 game booths held the attention of young and old.

In 1991, the Festival was moved to St Paul's school grounds and for in 1992, the annual event received national fame by being listed in the World Book Encyclopedia. In 1993, a T-Shirt design contest was held. In 1993 and 1994, the event made the front cover of Sun Herald's "Marquis".



In 1996, celebrating its 20th-Year, the Seafood Festival was spread along Highway 90 in its new park expansion, *Parc St. Paul*, fronting the school and Church. A very successful year was had, as Parish neighboring Parish members, the Pass Christian community, and the entire coast made the 3-day week-end a totally hoop-la event.

Christmas in the Pass

Christmas in the Pass had its first extravaganza in December of 1985. The Merchants committee was formed with the support of the City and the Chamber of Commerce. Santa held forth at St. Paul's Gym for photo sessions with the kiddies who were left under supervised play. The kids also entertained during the Christmas story-hour while awaiting their parents who were free to go browsing.

By its third year, the rapidly growing celebration had gained a reputation throughout South Mississippi as an evening the whole family could enjoy. Santa arrived at Memorial Park and paraded down Scenic Drive to Second Street where he sat for photos and listened to the children's wish lists. The Merchant open-houses encouraged thousands of guests to register for prizes as they crowded the streets filled with anticipation and merriment.

Each year produced new embellishments. The kids love the "Holly Trolley" rides, entertainment has been provided by the Keesler Drum and Bugle Corps, choirs from local churches, gumbo cook-offs, a Seafood dinner at St. Paul's, all happily transpiring while some venturers have their faces painted in Christmas cheer. The youngsters have been delighted with Choo-choo train rides.

During the years, each advent of *Christmas in the Pass* introduces new innovations such as contests for the best decorated business, residence, and boat. Santa has even dropped in by Helicopter. Music from Jazz Bands may generate crowd participation in *Second Line* dancing. Visitors vie for hourly drawings for a free "*Buying Spree*". Fireworks into the Harbor have sometimes celebrated the occasion.

The streets are filled with small groups of minstrels and singing carolers as merchants offer special treats to the miriad of strolling tourists and locals who drop by the decorated shops filled with Christmas lights and ornaments. The tree lighting ceremony takes place at Memorial Park backed by wonderful sounds of a Christmas concert.

Drawing upon the City's richest assets the harbor has become jumping with anticipation with beautiful lights cascading down the masts and sails of the magnificent *boat parade*. The downtown historic district explodes into a huge block party with safe-havens at each merchant's shop offering warm mugs of chocolate or spiced rum-flavored beverages with holiday cookies. Santa alights from the North Pole passing out candy canes to young and old as he signals the Annual Tree Lighting in the Park.

Early Churches of the Pass

St. Paul Catholic Church

Monsignor Ron Herzog, St. Paul's Parish Pastor, announced the new 50 year Jubilation era. St. Paul officials, in completion of its third 50-year Jubilee period, proclaimed the year of 1997 as its ***JUBILEE-3*** celebration. In Pass Christian, one hundred and fifty years ago, in the year 1847, the first recorded baptisms took place with five white parishioners and one Negro slave becoming baptized on September 29th. In October of 1847, Father Buteux of Bay St. Louis was placed in charge of the developing Pass Christian mission and formed its first Confirmation class.

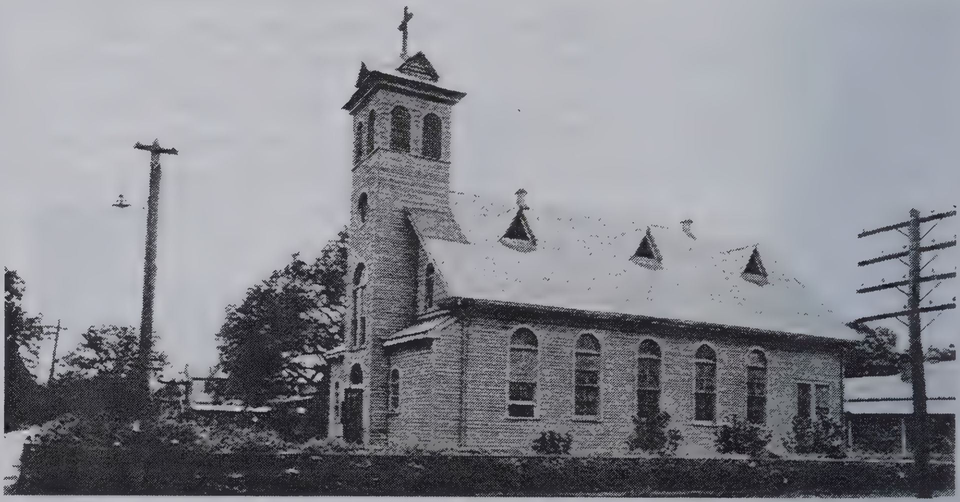
The St. Paul Catholic cemetery was dedicated in 1880 and the small church was replaced with a new larger one in 1851. However, this was followed by a devastating fire in 1876, which leveled the Church along with adjacent buildings. Therefore, another church was built to replace that one in 1881. However, due to Camille's invasion of the Pass, that one was condemned and a new, modern, and larger St Paul's Catholic Church was built and dedicated in February 1972.

St. Paul Catholic Church
Historic Church Dates

1843 - First Mission Priest, Father Labbé
1844 - First Mass celebrated at Mission Church
1847 - First Baptisms, Parish established
1851 - First Parish Church built
1876 - Parish Church destroyed by Fire
1879 - Second Parish Church built
1969 - Camille damages
1970 - Second Parish Church razed
1972 - Third Parish Church built
1997 - Sesquicentennial Jubilee-3 celebrated

Mother of Mercy Catholic Church

Originally called St. Philomena's Church, it was built and completed on March 5, 1911. The organization of the church was established by the St. Joseph's Society for Colored Missions, which acquired the land from J.H. Knost to build a church, a convent and a school. The new Apostalate was soon given charge to the Josephite Fathers of Mill Hill, England with Father Luke Plunkett recieving the first appointment who was succeeded by Stephen Sweeney in 1919. The church edifice is reportedly the oldest unmodified standing church building in the City of Pass Christian. The others have been rebuilt due to Camille damages. The interior and the altar are serenely beautiful and inspiring.



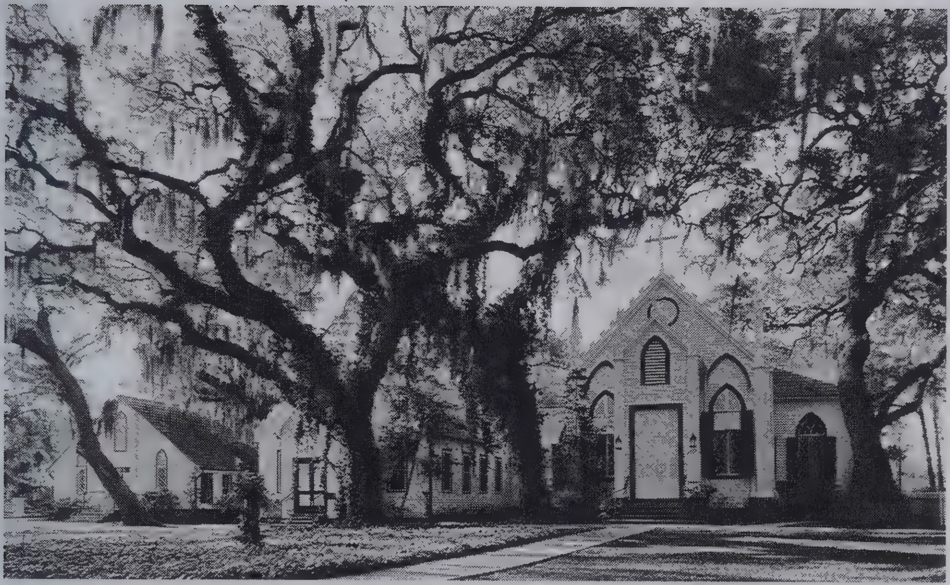
Our Mother of Mercy
Originally named St. Philomena's Church, it is currently under renovations and is the oldest Catholic Church edifice in Pass Christian, dedicated on March 20, 1911.

Sunday morning Masses are at 7 and 9. Newcomers to these services usually meet with inspiring and uplifting voices from the church choir membership.

Trinity Episcopal Church

The original Trinity Episcopal Church was one of the loveliest small churches on the entire Coast. It was erected on land donated by John Henderson and his wife and completed in 1849.

John and Louisa Henderson had also given Trinity some land north of the church for a churchyard called the Live Oak Cemetery. A part of the cemetery was designated "free ground" to be used for the burial of both whites and blacks.



Trinity Episcopal Church
Trinity Parish was organized in 1849 and its first church was built in 1850 on lands donated by John and Louisa Henderson. The new church complex has been completely rebuilt to the order of the first church following the destructions of Camille to the church buildings shown in this photo.

Following the Hurricane Camille intervention, the tragedy of Trinity Episcopal Church, parallels the courage and the spirit of the entire Pass Christian community in its Post-Camille revival. The church was completely destroyed. The Pastor lost his wife and the caretaker lost thirteen of his family in seeking safety in the sanctuary.

The newly rebuilt church was dedicated on November, 14 1971. With the help of contributions received from all over the world, the church was recreated as nearly as possible to the original. With the aid of volunteers from neighboring parishes of the Diocese, remnants of the first church were recovered and reconstituted. Valuable church records, altar vessels, the silver Communion service ensemble and other cherished items were found and refurbished. One of the Celtic crosses, fashioned for the first church nave was restored. Placed in the exterior of the sanctuary onto the opening of the breezeway is one of the original cypress doors. The original church bell had been stolen and a replica was installed for the dedication. However, just before Christmas of 1971, the original bronze bell was recovered and reinstalled.

Today the church stands as a monument of gratitude to those whose tireless efforts and generosity made it possible. Surrounded by moss laden oaks, it is now located just a short distance westerly of its original foundation. The new church also remains as a memorial to those who were killed by Camille's devastation to the Coast.

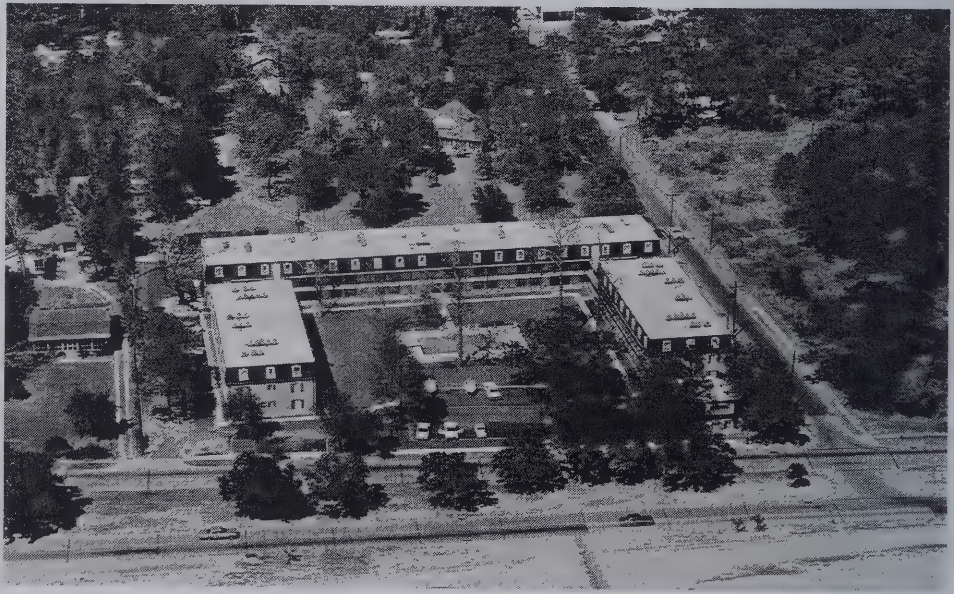
Twelve stained glass windows depict Christ's apostles. Six of these honor the Pastor's wife and five other church women who died in the storm. An outdoor fountain was also dedicated for a deceased parishioner of the Vietnam war.

Besides the celebrations of the Gulf Coast Tricentennial, Trinity Episcopal Church will be celebrating its Sesquicentennial in 1999.

Camille was no Lady

Hotels and motels had not turned off their "No Vacancy" signs for the weekend. As on any Friday during the heat of Summer, the Coast was filled with tourists. There was little concern for weather reports; the sun was shining brightly. Later that afternoon, radios announced that a tropical storm south of Miami had converted to hurricane strength and was cutting across Cuba. Early the following morning, the Coastal area from Biloxi to St. Marks, Florida was placed on *Hurricane Watch*. In escalating moments, TV stations started advising evacuation of certain low lying areas. Early Sunday, August 17th, the storm was southeast of New Orleans by 200 miles. A *Hurricane Warning* was then announced for the entire Mississippi Coast. Evacuation was advised.

In Pass Christian, Chief of Police Jerry Peralta led his small force of patrolmen throughout the "Pass", assisting in the evacuation process.



The Richelieu Apartments
This 3-story apartment complex was completely flattened as a result of being in Camille's path. The 200 mile winds and the 30-foot tidal waves broke up the Hurricane party where 24 residents remained through much of the night to celebrate. Fortunately, many of them did not stay to the very end.

Many of the townsfolk were hurricane resistent in that they had weathered many killer storms before. They were determined to hold their ground.

Chief Peralta and several other patrolling police and fire personnel had passed by the three story Richelieu Apartments. The managers, Mr. and Mrs. Jones, were part of 24 residents celebrating with a hurricane party. Upon their refusal to leave, he asked them to list their next of kin. Unmoved, they continued to party.

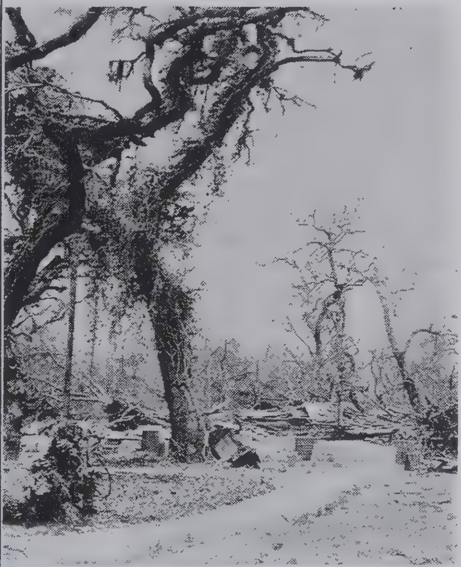
George Watson put a call out to some 300 citizens to take shelter at the "Pass" High School Gymnasium. Many of the folk were reluctant to abandon their comfortable homes, but, in trust, followed his bidding. At 6 p.m. the siren at the Pass Christian Fire Station sounded loudly, proclaiming the hurricane's imminent approach.

Camille had struck with an calamitous fury shortly after ten p.m. The Mississippi Coast was devastated by winds clocked at more than 200 mph and tidal waves surging up to 30 feet. The unforeseen tidal wave moved across the beach, across highway 90, and onto the town. The mass of water, with rolling breakers on top, was so mammoth that many buildings and houses were instantly smashed to pieces. A solid wall of water advanced past Scenic Drive, crashing down the hill toward Second Street, and crossed the railroad tracks, rolling further northward. Then a second rush of water bombarded and inundated most of the town. The bayous backed up to meet the Gulf tidal waters flooding many areas 5 to 15 feet deep. Automobiles were submerged, resulting in emergency vehicles being rendered useless.

Glass windows crumbled. The water rose higher and higher. Some people were thrown into the stampeding water, not to be retrieved until the next day. Several floated aboard sections of roofing throughout the night. Bruised and badly battered, one person described her roof top perch as the "wildest ride of my life".

As the evening progressed, the hurtling winds picked up in excess of 200 mph. There were many valiant deeds performed that night by civil defense personnel, law enforcement officers, firemen, military personnel, and civilians in safeguarding others in distress. Screams for assistance were answered with daring rescues while other screams were hushed by the raging roar of the winds, not ever to be heard. Some pleas for help went unanswered because the would-be saviors could not locate the source of the screams.

Areas not hit directly by the tidal waves were still deeply affected. As the hurricane hurled its full strength, those who had gone to bed were awakened by the strong gusts of wind. All of a sudden, water was rising from the floor.

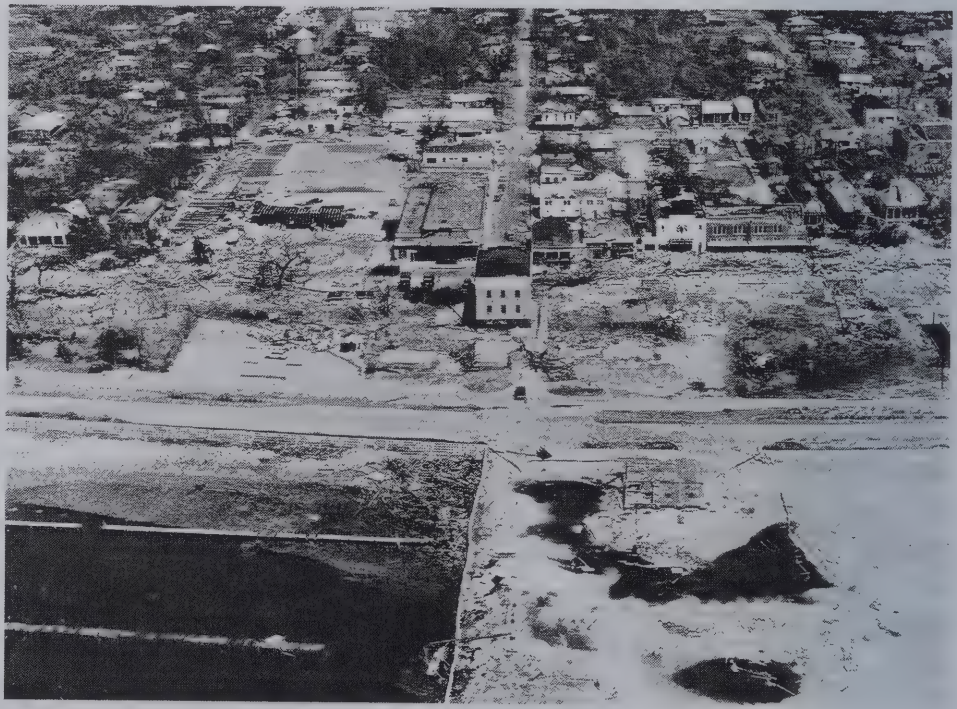


Trinitiy Episcopal Church
Completely flattened with the exception of the remaining stairs which lead to nowhere.

The water kept rising. Siding boards were ripped off their homes, as walls cracked open and windows and portions of roofing or floors above crumbled down. Then the house would cave in. Those attempting to escape by getting up on car tops would then be carried off by the raging waters. Some managed to stay afloat by catching hold of passing pieces of furniture or debris.

Other residents were trapped and would not leave their safe havens for fear of losing their lives. Pass residents spent the most terrifying night of their lives not knowing how much longer they could hold on. Many of them had ample time to reflect on the wisdom of their decision to stay, rather than evacuate as directed.

As the night drew to a close, the water started receding. People began assisting others in need. Well before daylight, more and more people began moving about, almost totally on foot, because vehicles had been under water and would not operate. The streets were blocked with debris and fallen trees. Then came the dawn. Daylight brought relief and concern. Relief was in the knowledge that the storm had passed, reducing the fears of the night, and that many friends and relatives had survived. Concern then turned to reviewing the full extent of damage and in counting the dead.



At Dawn's early light
Downtown Pass Christian is shown with the Harbor, the Yacht Club and the beach area completely razed. In the center of the photo is the old City Hall at the foot of Market Avenue. It had to be toppled due to extensive damages. Debris is strewn around all of the buildings and dwellings.

This night of terror resulted in the inundation of fashionable beachfront homes, hotels, lounges, restaurants, gasoline stations, office buildings, and the City Hall. All along U.S. Highway 90 devastation was piled high with debris. The downtown beachfront showed nothing but wreckage and destruction. Boards, broken window sills, twisted metal siding, ripped signs, and dissected vessels littered the beaches and highway. Trees, houses, businesses, and boats were splintered into match sticks. The initial recovery started with the survivors trying to do for themselves. They attempted to clear pathways through the major streets. There was no electricity, no water, no ice, no telephones, no newspaper deliveries, and, thus, no way to communicate with friends and relatives. Major relief from outside Pass Christian did not come until weeks later. Those who were too old to work and those who would not pitch-in to work were sent off to Camp Shelby near Hattiesburg. Only the strong of body, mind, and spirit remained to share in the long dreary task confronting them. A spirited comraderie evolved amongst these townsfolk. American flags were raised in a demonstration of a shared sense of patriotism and success in having survived.

During this ardent work phase, there were two weeks of *Communal Utopia*, shared by those citizens who worked in the big clean-up. They became comrades. Black, white, rich, poor; all dined together, consuming the same food prepared at "Pass" High School. They all bathed in the same wells together.

They also learned to laugh together as they discovered *steps to nowhere* and bath tubs hanging in mid-air. However, once organized disaster support phased in, the harmonious assembly once more broke down into individuals caring for their separate properties and problems.

The "unbelievable" brutality and devastation of Camille persuaded the Climatic Control Agency to remove her name from future Hurricane Listings -- much like they remove the jersey numbers of specially selected retiring sports celebrities.

The area which suffered most was Pass Christian. Every structure in the "Pass" and its immediate area was damaged by the storm. Seventy-eight residents were killed, either during the storm or from injuries received during Camille. The killer storm took the lives of more people from the "Pass" than any other coastal community.

The City of Pass Christian in its reclamation has numerous monuments to reflect on. However, with the passage of time these monuments have become obscured by new structures, new foliage and many new faces.

CAMILLE
AUGUST 17 1969

The Camille Memorial
Dedicated to Inez Bourdin, for her active support of many community programs, she propelled the idea for memorializing the victims of the devastating Hurricane of 1969.

A marble commemorative shrine was established in Memorial Park acknowledging the 78 Camille victims. The etched stone was also dedicated to Inez Bourdin who promoted the idea for a permanent remembrance. She and Billy Bourdin diligently pursued the names of each victim for proper identity and name spelling. The VFW assumed the task to collect the funds and when the projected budget was not complete, County donations were supplemented through the aid of David LaRosa.

The School Systems

Pass Christian enjoys the benefits of a parochial school, a private school and three levels of public schools.

St. Paul Elementary Catholic School provides instructions to grades kindergarten through the sixth level.

Coast Episcopal School located at the east end of Pass Christian has grades six through High School.

The Pass Christian School System serves the City as well as the DeLisle area. The System in the inner-city has an Elementary School serving grades one through six located on North Street west of Henderson Ave.

The Middle school is located on Second Street providing training for grades six, seven and eight.

The Pass Christian High School has a new facility on a large campus with a full compliment of buildings providing instruction to grades nine, ten, eleven and twelve.

Historic Scenic Drive

Scenic Drive extends east and west of the center of Pass Christian for two-and-a-half miles and its entirety is included within Pass Christian's Historic District. There are approximately 120 dwellings and buildings dispersed along the 330 acres enclosing the Historic Street. These homes and structures adhere to national historic preservation restrictions.

Most of the early construction during the early 1800s produced mainly summerhouses that were single-story structures with gable roofs and three or five bay windows and inset galleries. Styling was often a blend of Greek Revival and local vernacular ranging from cottages to mansions. These represent 17 varying architectural styles in the Scenic Drive Historic District.

Houses erected after 1865 were usually larger and often featured hipped or gambrel roofs with inset dormers. Colonial Revival architecture became popular in endeavoring to be homogenous with the older structures.

Before Highway 90
Scenic Drive, first known as Front Road or Beach Drive, was pervaded on both sides by the beauty and the shade of the Live Oaks which completely followed the course along the Beach. Not only is this street's history, but also its beauty, is held manifest in Pass Christian. *(This photo is courtesy of Hancock Bank with a view from the east looking westward.)*

In 1979, the Mississippi Department of Archives and History wrote the following plaudits on the architectural qualities of Pass Christian.

> *Despite recent building losses due to a devastating hurricane, Scenic Drive remains the largest architecturally intact major 19th Century resort area in the South and one of*

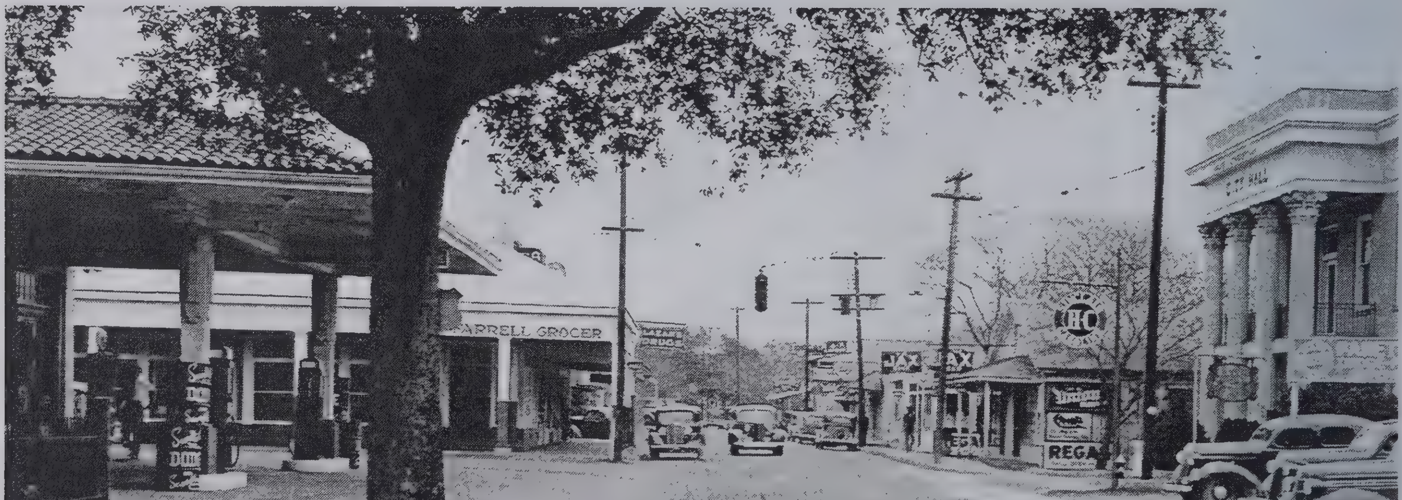
only a few in the nation like Cape May, New Jersey, and Newport, Rhode Island, both of which are National Historic Landmarks that have managed to retain most of their original character.

Nearly all of the homes along Scenic Drive have historic architectural characteristics for which they are registered in the National Register of Historic Places. These homes are regulated by the Pass Christian Historic Preservation Commission and monitored by the Mississippi Department of Archives and History. Since new owners may apply for permits to change a building's structure, they may ultimately cause remodeling/destruction which is prohibited by the Preservation Commission. The ruling guidelines protect all genuine historic structures from obliteration from their original architectural design. Nevertheless, on occasion, complications arise with attempts to modernize historic buildings while still attempting to preserve their historic features.

Vernacular Greek Revival cottages were indigenous to the Mississippi Gulf Coast area both before and after the Civil War. A large percentage of these houses predominated along the Gulf Coast, however much of the architectural heritage has been destroyed or remodeled beyond recognition making the ones remaining both rare and significant. **This results in making Pass Christian's Scenic Drive most unique.**

Downtown Main Street - 1950s

Looking east down U.S. Highway 90, now Scenic Drive, and earlier known as First Street. The old City Hall was built by Fred Sutter in 1885. The brick City Hall depicted here was built in 1926 and faced the entrance to Market Street. Market Street did not open to the beach or harbor. The gasoline station on the left is now the Garment Factory. Next to City Hall were three or four bar rooms lining the curbing. The Farrell Grocery building is now the Adolph Bourdin Building with the *Morning Market* located in its corner.



The Hillyer House

Located at 207 East Scenic Drive. The *Hillyer House* was built in 1950. The two-story, frame, duplex was originally built by Edgar Bohn and called the Bohn Building. The Bohn family came to the Pass from Prussia in 1860 with Nicholas Bohn. His sons were, Henry, a shoe merchant and W.J. Bohn, a blacksmith. In 1970, exterior renovations were added following Camille Hurricane damages.

Six members of the Reed family had lost their homes and belongings in Hurricane Camille. Nellie Hillyer and Katherine Reed began researching sources to replace lost articles, furnishings, and other household treasures. Based in Nellie's house, this service was extended to residents of Pass Christian who chose to remain and start over.

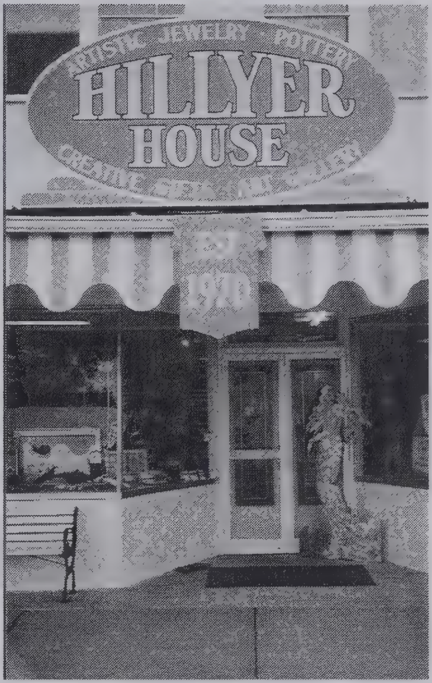
Moving to it's present location in 1970, the name Hillyer House was retained. For five years furniture, draperies and carpets were offered at wholesale cost. To support the service, antiques, hand crafted furniture, accessories and gifts were offered at retail and gradually became the mainstay of business.

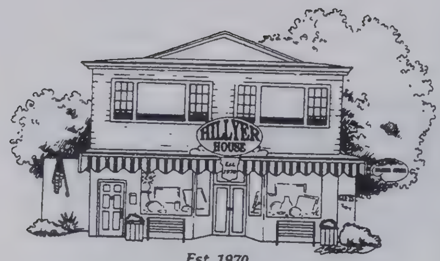
Trips to England, France, and market shows in Atlanta, Dallas, and San Francisco were used to bring the shop unique selections from all over the world.

In 1975, Katherine became the sole owner with her daughter Paige assisting after school hours. Paige became excited with the opportunities afforded by the eclectic enterprise and in 1978 engaged the Hillyer House full time and soon afterwards join with her mother in an operating partnership.

They braved another devastating hurricane in 1985, which resulted in extensive losses. Drawing on their survivor strengths and not having the available funds to continue shopping trips abroad, they sought for inventory replacements closer to home. This resulted in their desire to accommodate lines that were predominantly "Made in America."

Presently, **Hillyer House** exhibits artistry of jewelers, potters, glass blowers, water color artists, and metalsmiths. More than 175 talented American artists and craftsmen are represented including Mississippians. Shipments are received daily in providing an ever changing selection of original creations. Contributing to their avid interest for preservation of marine life is exemplified not only by an extensive nautical selection, but also the mermaid which graces their portals. They also seek out and encourage local coast artisans to display their crafts and talents at the Hillyer House.





Est. 1970

All Artesans sign exclusive agreements affording them high visibility and extensive publicity. Interest in them goes beyond business into true friendships.

The two, Katherine and Paige, mother and daughter, not only share in a partnership, but demonstrate an energetic friendship from one to the other that is greatly admired by their employees and patrons alike.

Hillyer House features a large selection of handcrafted jewelry in unique designs. All earrings, necklaces, bracelets, and pins are created in gold, silver, porcelain, pewter, glass, brass and copper. Today, more than 50 jewelers from coast to coast offer enticing selections in most affordable price ranges.

Katherine and Paige contract with more than 30 exceptionally talented potters who create handsculptured bowls, casseroles, pitchers, platters, vases, wind-chimes, shore birds, mermaids, crawfish, crabs and fish. Enchanting glazes represent a magnificent array of beautiful colors.

The Gallery offers unique items in hand-blown glass, such as candle oil lamps, bowls and vases in radiant colors. Other featured items include numerous designs of pewter serving trays, candlesticks, mirrors, agate-mineral bookends and southern gourmet foods.

Hillyer House is a leader on the Coast in maintaining an Art Gallery to showcase the works of many artists -- local and afar. On continuing display are original watercolors, magnificent copper fountains and copper enamel sculptures of Caribbean fish and water fowl. It is an adventure in discovery for unique and exciting items for the home or for gift selections.

Community Enrichment: In 1992, Paige was the promoter and chair-person of the Federal project called the *Main Street Program.* This community supported group project promoted matching funds from corporations, merchants, and individuals in securing paint for the artist/painter, John Trevino. This resulted in the decorative wall murals which can be seen at the Garment Factory located on the corner of Market Avenue and Scenic Drive. These doorways, windows, and canapes provide an interesting decorative facade signalling a major improvement and metamorphosis to the downtown area.

St. Patrick's Day

Krewe of Blarney Halfast Walkin' Klub

The first St. Patrick's Parade was sponsored by the West Harrison County Hibernian Social and Benefit Society as a Pass Christian - Long Beach parading group which made its first and last parade on March 16, 1969, consistinf of truck float "hangovers" from the Mardi Gras parades.

The Honorable Mayors J.J. O'Wittman and Bob O'Reed of the sister cities issued separate proclamations honoring the Wearing of the Green. "We invite all Irish men and women and those *'Irish at Heart'* to participate in the parade or to make their presence made in bidding the passing cavalcade."

Everyone enjoyed a great time with the exception of one incident. Gerald O'Toole while riding in one of the first floats, heard on his return that his Service station in Henderson Point was robbed of $114.00.

Twenty Five years later, in 1995, a call was made to all men and women of *the Pass* to hearken to the Little People of Ireland, the Leprechauns. Wearin' o' the Green was once more the order of the Day. Pass Christian, once more, would pass the cabbage and flow with green beer. *Erin go Bragh!* The Krewe of Blarney Halfast Walkin' Klub was organized as the only walking parade on the Coast. The marchers strut down Scenic Drive from the VFW Hall to the Miramar Nursing Lodge. VIPs dress in tux with green sashes, attended by businessmen, political officials, *"Second-Liners"*, and the curious.

The first parade was led by Grand Marshall David LaRosa and Colleen Kelly Gallagher Zeigler. The second parade, by Mayor Billy McDonald and India Byrd McDonald. 1997, by State Representative Jim Simpson and Gail Bourdin Chasteen. 1998, Senator Scottie Cuevas and Melissa Malley, 1999, Chipper McDermott and Missy McDonald, 2000, Supervisor Marlin Ladner and Corene Lewis.

HALFAST WALKIN' KLU

Market Street

Market Street divides the town by East from West establishing an unusually unique street addressing system. The blocks on each side of Market begin with 100 with a divisional direction of 100 East and 100 West. In further confusion to the newcomer is that on the east, the street numbers on the northside are odd, whereas on the west, the street numbers on the northside are even. Likewise, along the southside of the street, the numbers are odd on the west and even on the east.

Historic Note: Since the 1850s, the center of Town has been at this intersection. In 1838, and again in 1877, the central business section burned down. In June of 1854, the Town Recorder (Mayor), John Brill and his wife Margaret gave the City, a 15 foot strip of their property running north and south with the stipulation that they could build a trading store on the south side of Front Street (Scenic Drive). This they called the Market House and that is how the street was later called the Market Road. The Brills also built and owned the commercial wharf at the foot of Market Road, which extended into the Sound allowing schooners a mooring place.

At this same site in 1885, was built a Town Hall by Frank Sutter. In 1926, that hall was replaced with a two-story brick City Hall with four large doric columns facing North from the south side of Scenic Drive. The building was 3-story at its southern end as it descended the bluff toward the Sound. It was demolished after Camille's destruction.

Frank Sutter was not just a builder, but a visionary who promoted the protection seawall along the coast. As Mayor, he promoted the Pass as *America's Garden of Eden*, which logo he had emblazoned on the Town's official stationery.

Following Camille, the City Hall building was not only severely damaged but because it also obstructed the view of the Gulf, it was razed in October of 1970 and the roadbed opened to Highway 90. The new City Hall at Scenic and Hiern was dedicated on May 2, 1971.

Extract from the new Ordinance Book of Pass Christian of 1858. "The road opening South on the Gulf of Mexico, and running thence North to the Northern boundary line of said (Town) corporation, and having at is southern terminus, the public Market House, shall be known as Market Street: the said street shall be of a uniform width of fifty feet, including a banquet of eight feet on each side thereof."

Davis Avenue

Davis Avenue abounds with history as the main business and commercial artery for Pass Christian. Even though there are only about 18 to 20 site locations in the block between Scenic Drive and Second Street, the one block area has continued as a business center over the past 150 years. The two oldest current locations are Martin's Hardware Store and Bourdin Brothers Plumbing. The eastern side of the Avenue was the site of one of Pass Christian's most beautiful hotels, the *Mexican Gulf Hotel* which faced on Davis and backed up to what is now the War Memorial Park. Several of the current homes and businesses have retained and preserved the original wrought iron fence which was originally installed with the Hotel.

In 1948, parking meters were installed along Davis as a means of regulating the congestion. However, some townfolks didn't take well to the idea because one morning the merchants found empty holes in the curbing where several of the meters had been uprooted. Several weeks later, they were found discarded in a wooded area on North Street. Neither was the City Marshall fond of Mayor Hursey. To rile him, Marshall Bravo Woodcock would keep a pocket full of pennies, and while walking the street, "Bravo" would make coin deposits in expired meters.

In 1962 Davis Avenue was closed for a short period to allow for its widening by a variation of 29 inches at Second Street to 42 inches at Scenic Drive. However, some folks still have problems backing into the space in front of the 4 R's Restaurant due to an "S" in the curbing that didn't get straightened out. Prior to widening Davis, there were many cars illegally parking atop the sidewalks.

In 1969, before Camille, the Davis Avenue merchants got together to discuss spearheading a Business and Social Organization which was hoped to result in other parts of the City establishing their own organizations to do likewise.

In 1983, the Chamber of Commerce planted Crepe Myrtle trees fostering a Davis Avenue beautification program.

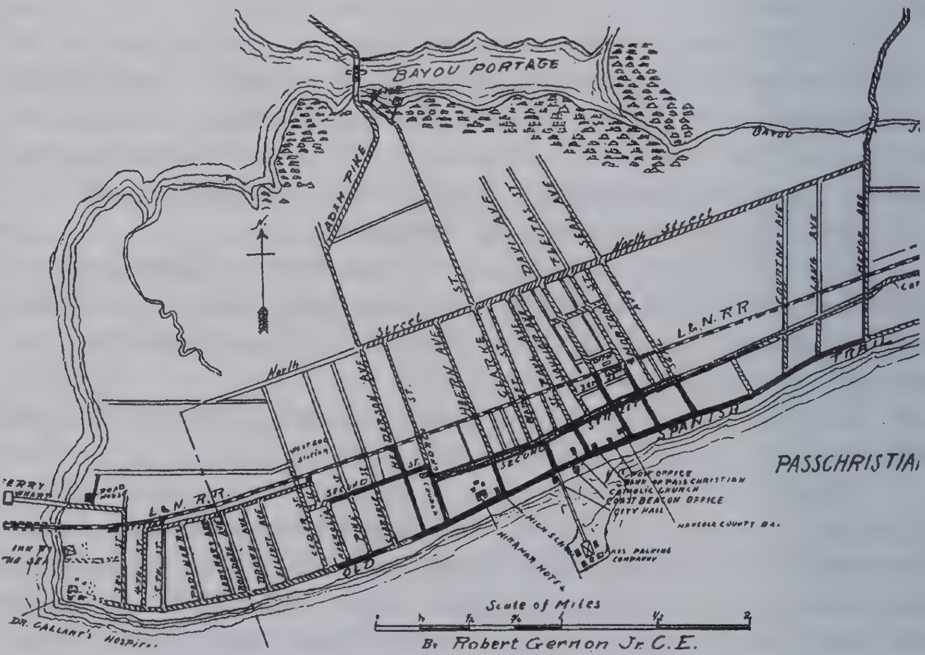
During the 1830's there were 3 Davises. Benjamin Davis was a store owner and his brother, Larned Davis, was the town mayor (Recorder). The third was Colonel Alfred Davis, a vintner producing scuppernong wine from his orchards. Davis Avenue was originally called *Davis Alley* since it was at first used as a private alleyway to access the beachfront from the Colonel's inland property vineyards.

Second Street

Second Street was laid out and used as a common street by many of the first inhabitants of the *Pass*. It was primarily an access alleyway to reach other roads which existed in the Henderson Point area to the West and the Red Creek Road, which crossed the bayous to Menge. It was originally called Rear Road or Back Road during the pre-Civil War days. The roadway also provided a division break through most of the properties which had followed the original French and Spanish grants that measured 40 arpents deep, running from the Beach to the marsh areas of Bayou Portage or Bayou Johnson. Second Street became a public throughway with the revised Town ordinances of 1858. It was then called Rear Road.

Already existing to the west, was St. Louis Avenue which was called *Camino a la Bahia San Luis* by the Spanish surveyors. However, St. Louis Avenue no longer extends to the Bay since its western reaches were apparently encroached on by the Railroad right-of-way takeover in the 1850s.

During the late 1890s to 1920s, a street-car route ran from Biloxi to Trinity Episcopal Church. The route was on Second Street in Pass Christian. It was also an extension of the inland road to Biloxi, called *Pass Christian Road*, now known as *Pass Road* in other areas.


BAYOU PORTAGE
BAYOU
ADAM PIKE
N.
North Street
North Street
L.&N. R.R.
L.&N. R.R.
West End Station
FERRY WHARF
ROAD HOUSE
INN BY THE SEA
DR. GALLANT'S HOSPITAL
ST. LOUIS ST.
4TH. ST.
5TH. ST.
DEPOITMARS AVE
MARKHAM AVE
BOULDAIRE AVE
TORANE AVE
ELLIOTT AVE
CEDAR ST.
MAGNOLIA
PINE
SPRUCE
DERSAN AVE
ST.
NORTH AVE
CLARKE ST.
DAVIS AVE
FLEITAS AVE
SEAL AVE
COURTNEY AVE
LANE AVE
MENGE AVE
SECOND
SECOND STREET
SPANISH TRAIL
OLD
PASSCHRISTIAN
POST OFFICE
BANK OF PASS CHRISTIAN
CATHOLIC CHURCH
COAST BEACON OFFICE
CITY HALL
HANCOCK COUNTY BA.
HIGH SCHOOL
MIRAMAR HOTEL
PASS PACKING COMPANY
Scale of Miles
By Robert Gernon Jr. C.E.

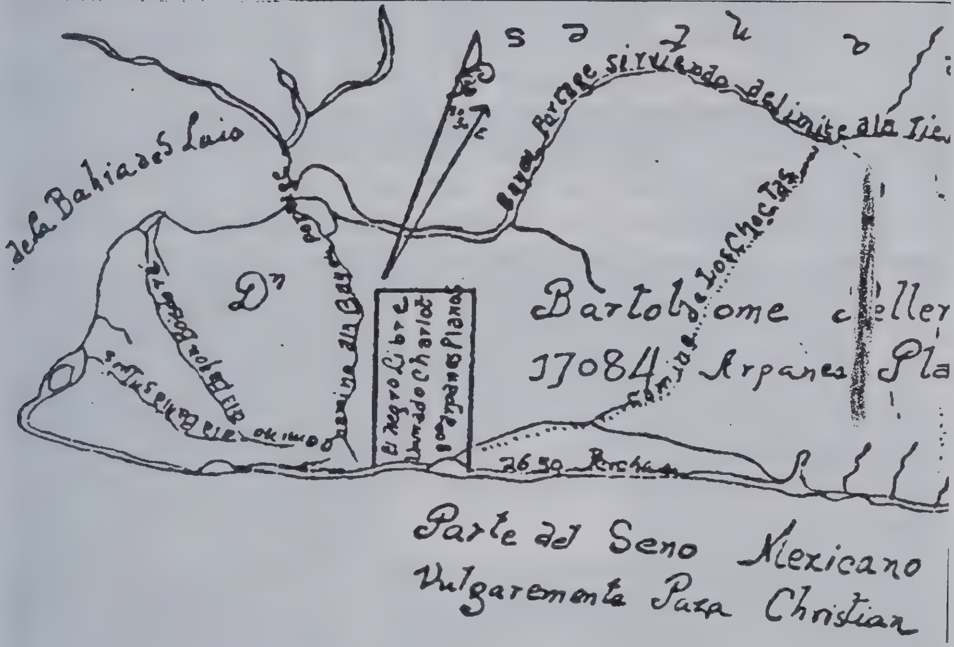
1925 Map

Examining from the west, this map shows some interesting sites which have not been identified for origin, such as Dr. Gallant's Hospital at Henderson Point. Note the Ferry wharf which existed prior to the 1928 wooden automobile bridge. Some street name or location errors are noted, such as: St. Louis Street at Henderson is shown as Second, and Adam Pike is incorrectly placed. Several roadways crossing Pass Christian Isles and Timberidge no longer exist, as well as the West Side Station at Cedar was a former railroad passenger stop-off.

At the P.C.Y.C. site was the Pass Packing Company. The highschool is the present location of City Hall. The Bank of Pass Christian is the current Historical Society and the Post Office is the location of Allen Appliances. Notice that the Hancock Bank is at its original site fronting on Davis Ave. behind its current location. The Depot displayed on the Cover of this book is shown between Davis and Fleitas.

Henderson Avenue

Henderson Avenue was originally called Portage Road since it was the main passage-way to access Bayou Portage and DeLisle. The only other roadway leading northward was Menge Avenue, which was formerly called Red Creek Road and before that, it was an early established Choctaw Indian trace as indicated on the map below.


dela Bahiade S Luis
Dn
Bayou Portage sirviendo de limite ala Tie
Camino de Los Choctas
El Negro Libre llamado Charlot 800 arpanes Planos
Bartolome eller
17084 Arpanes Pla
2650 Perchas
Parte del Seno Mexicano
Vulgaremente Paza Christian

Pass Christian 1809 Surveyor's Map
The area shown was known by the Spanish as the District of Bay St. Louis (Bahia de S^n Luis) in West Florida (*Florida Occidental*). The map was drawn by the Spaniard de Finiels in conjunction with granting the property to Bartholemew Pellerin. The property was first granted to Francois Carriere in 1781 who was survived by the Widow Asmard, his wife.

The above map is the first descriptive map of Pass Christian and was drawn by the Spanish surveyor, de Finiels. The boxed area enclosed shows the land that was given to the freed slave, called Charlot, consisting of 800 square arpents. It was all of the downtown area including Market, Davis and Fleitas avenues.

The remaining large area was taken over by Bartholemew Pellerin, consisting of 17,084 square arpents with the northern boundary marked as Bayou Portage. To the west of Charlot's area, is indicated by three roadways described in Spanish and are translated from left to right, as: *Road to Bay St. Louis*, *Road to Bayou Boisdore*, and *Road to Bayou Portage*. (which is present-day Henderson Avenue)

The Pass Christian Public Library

The Pass Christian Library, a member of the Harrison County Library System, is located on Hiern Avenue behind the City Hall. The public library, erected in 1973, opened its doors with approximately 6,000 donated books and has grown to house over 33,000 volumes.

In order to accommodate the growing collection, the library opened a festive children's wing in June of 1992. This edition provides parents and children with dedicated quarters that are filled with easy-to-read and juvenile specific reading materials.

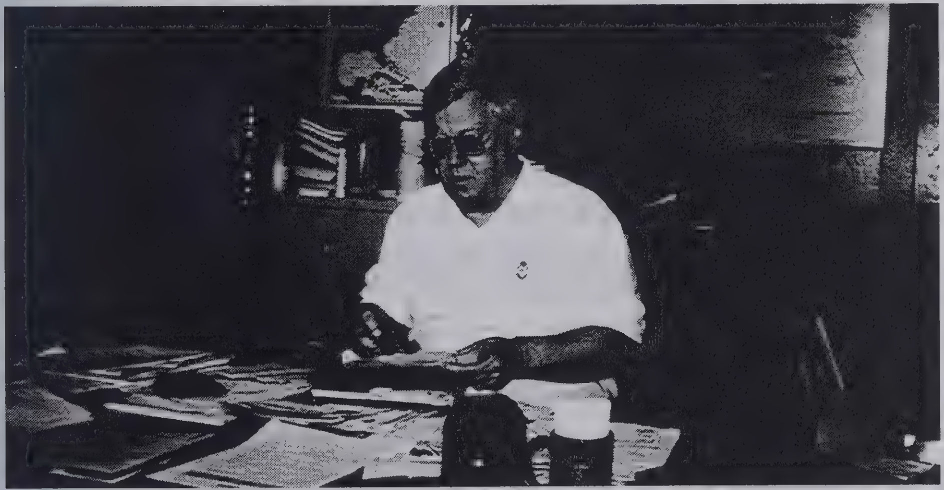
Aside from traditional library services, alternatives are offered to users in such elements as videos, audio cassettes, and computer use on seven independent state-of-the-art computer systems with sharing and storage capabilities. The Pass Christian Library was the first library on the Gulf Coast to provide internet access to the public. This growing system provides students and net-explorers with hours of educational and recreational searching. The library is electronically linked with seven other members of the Harrison County Library System revealing all book holdings in the county at one glance.

The computers are also equipped with many popular applications such as Word Perfect and MicroSoft Word with accompanying laser printers. Other office use equipment available to the public are: Copy-machine, Fax, Typewriter. Hours are: Monday through Friday, 7:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. (Tuesdays until 7:00 p.m.) and also Saturdays: 9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.

The Library Staff
Open six days a week and evenings on Tuesdays, the Librarians are devoted to help and serve. **Above:** Cynthia Anderson. **Below:** left to right, standing; Jerry Sellier, Helen Maldonado, Sally James, Ann McGraw, and seated, Linda McArthur.

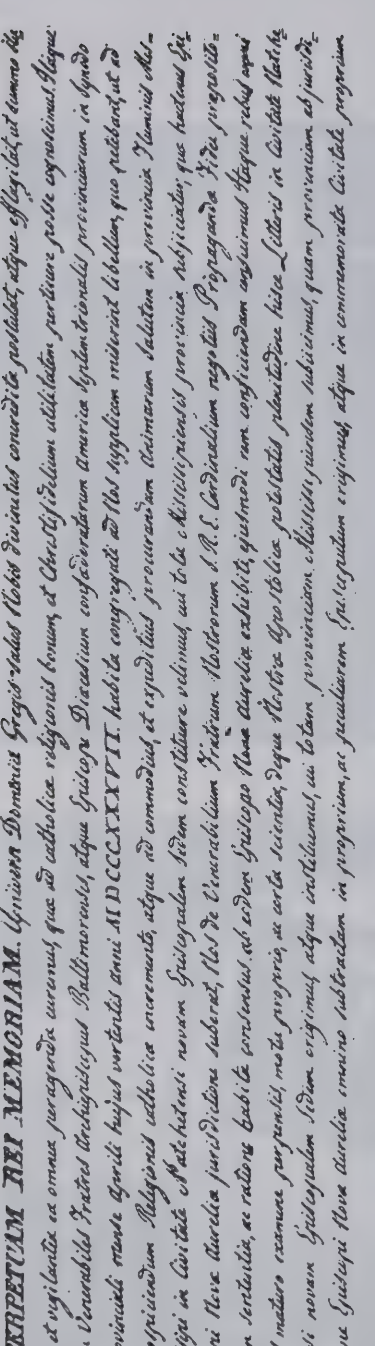
City Government

Pass Christian's City Hall is located on Scenic Drive at the same site of the original Lighthouse, which in 1831, was the first to be built on Mississippi's mainland. Overlooking the Municipal Harbor, the Mayor, Aldermen, and city employees make their headquarters.



Left Middle: Mayor Billy McDonald at his desk while signing a resolution.
Left Bottom: Pictured left to right: City Hall staff members, Grace Necaise, Tammy DiLorenzo, Vikki Goff, Val Isabelle, and Cassandra Alexander.
Top Right: Chief of Police, John Dubuisson.
Bottom Right: Rusty Necaise, Fire Chief

St. Paul Catholic Church – 150 year Sesquicentennial



AD PERPETUAM REI MEMORIAM.

The above Papal Bull of 1837 was decreed by Pope Gregory XVI proclaiming that a Diocese for Mississippi be established at Natchez.

The first church land purchased at the "Pass" was by the new Diocese, in 1843. The following year, Father Guillaume Labbé erected a *mission* church on a lot acquired from Edward Saucier. However, with the construction of the "first" Parish Church ,in 1851, Saucier's lot was returned to him.

Therefore, by reason of the activities of Fathers Guinand and Buteux; the year of 1847, established the beginning of a 150-year period, which is sanctified in the annals of St. Paul's Parish, and was commemorated during the year of 1997 with celebrations of its ***JUBILEE-3***.

Early Catholicity

Catholicism is Mississippi's oldest uninterrupted heritage. The first Holy Sacrifice of the Mass celebrated in the Mississippi territory was in 1540, during Hernando de Soto's journey from Florida to the Mississippi River. As they approached the Mississippi River, each Mass was celebrated as a "*Missa secca*," or *Dry Mass*. This was a result of the Indians having set fire to the storage of the ceremonial vestments and the sacrificial "hosts and wine". Not until 1673, did other missionaries begin to arrive from up the Mississippi River. They were led by Father Marquette and followed by the Seminarians of Quebec in 1699, with the Rev. Francis Joliet de Montigny and Rev. Antoine Davion. On encountering d'Iberville at Biloxi, Davion sought to replenish his supply of wine for the Holy Sacrifice. These clerics were later joined in their labors by the Rev. John Francis Buisson de St. Cosme.

At present-day Ocean Springs, the site of the first Biloxi settlement in 1699, Father Bordenave offered the first Mass on the Mississippi coast.

"The first ecclesiastical division for the Mississippi area was executed by Bienville in 1722 with the Carmelites stationed at Biloxi, Mobile and Fort Toulouse. These missionaries administered to Christian teachings amongst the Indians often at the face of death. On one occasion, Father Senat and a party of French soldiers were killed by the Chickasaws. One survivor was sent to Biloxi to report that the men were tortured and burned to death while chanting the *"Miserere"* (in conformity with true Christian valor)." [1]

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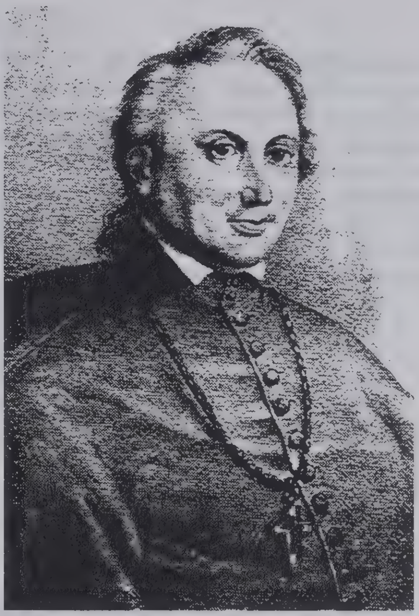
[1] "Diamond Jubilee, 1851—1926", St. Paul's Parish, 1926, p.3

When the territory was claimed by the Spanish in 1779, the King of Spain, remained true to Catholic religious belief, he sent priests to attend to the Catholic colonists. By 1788, a formidable Church House was built in Natchez, followed in 1791, with the arrival of four Irish clergymen. The Bishop of Salamanca sent Rev. Constantine McKenna, Rev. William Savage, Rev. Michael Lamport, and Rev. Gregory White to tend to the Mississippi missions. Later, when the Diocese of Louisiana was divided in 1826, Mississippi became the charge of the Bishop of New Orleans.

- It wasn't until 1837 that the Diocese of Natchez was established by Pope Gregory XVI. This was followed in 1840 with the appointment of the Most Rev. John Joseph Chanche to supervise the Diocese covering the entire state of Mississippi, some 46,340 square miles of wilderness.

In support of the souls in Pass Christian, Bishop Chanche acquired a plot of land in 1843 measuring 42 by 150 feet from Edward Saucier, over which church construction was supervised by Rev. Guillaume Labbé in 1844.[2] On Sunday, June 16th, he celebrated the first Catholic Mass. Thereafter, neighboring priests made occasional visits in administering to the people's spiritual needs. Even though the population was sparse, the people were God-fearing and loved the sacraments of the church. They looked every Sunday for the visitors in black or brown robes, but their desires were answered only on occasions, which could be any day of the week. Quite often, sermons were given under open skies when there were no churches.



Bishop John Mary Joseph Chanche
Bishop Chanche not only begged for financial help at New Orleans, but also he made several trips to northern states, and to Cuba, and to Europe. With money, hard to come by, the Cathedral at Natchez was twice placed at auction by its creditors.

The First Fifty Year Jubilee begins -- 1847

In 1847, Rev. Symphorien Guinand of Biloxi was authorized to conduct services in Pass Christian on a regular schedule. Then, also in 1847, the Rev. Louis Marie Stanislaus Buteux, while stationed in Bay St. Louis, was additionally charged with the Pass Christian Mission. The first sacraments recorded in the new Parish Record Book were the Baptisms on September 29, 1847, of five white settlers and one Negro slave. Found in the diary of Father Buteux was the following inscription. "Saturday, July 31, 1847, the feast of St. Ignatius: Bishop Chanche told me at Natchez that he confides to me: Bay St. Louis, Pass Christian, Pearl River, Jordan and Wolf River, (and) as far as 20 to 25 miles to the north."[3]

First St. Paul Baptisms
Baptized on September 29, 1847

John Brill ---- born June 15, 1847
Harriet Brill - born May 2, 1845
Charles Brill - born August 18, 1841
of John Brill and Marguerite Thatcher.
Baptized by Father Symphorien Guinand

James Lewis - born November 17, 1837
Martha Lewis - born October 6, 1835
of William Lewis and Marie Gutson.
Baptized by Father Stanislaus Buteux

Louise Nurse (a slave) - born March 5, 1847
of Bernard Benoit and his slave, Marie.
Bernard Benoit was a freed Mulatto landowner.
Child was baptized by Father Stanislaus Buteux

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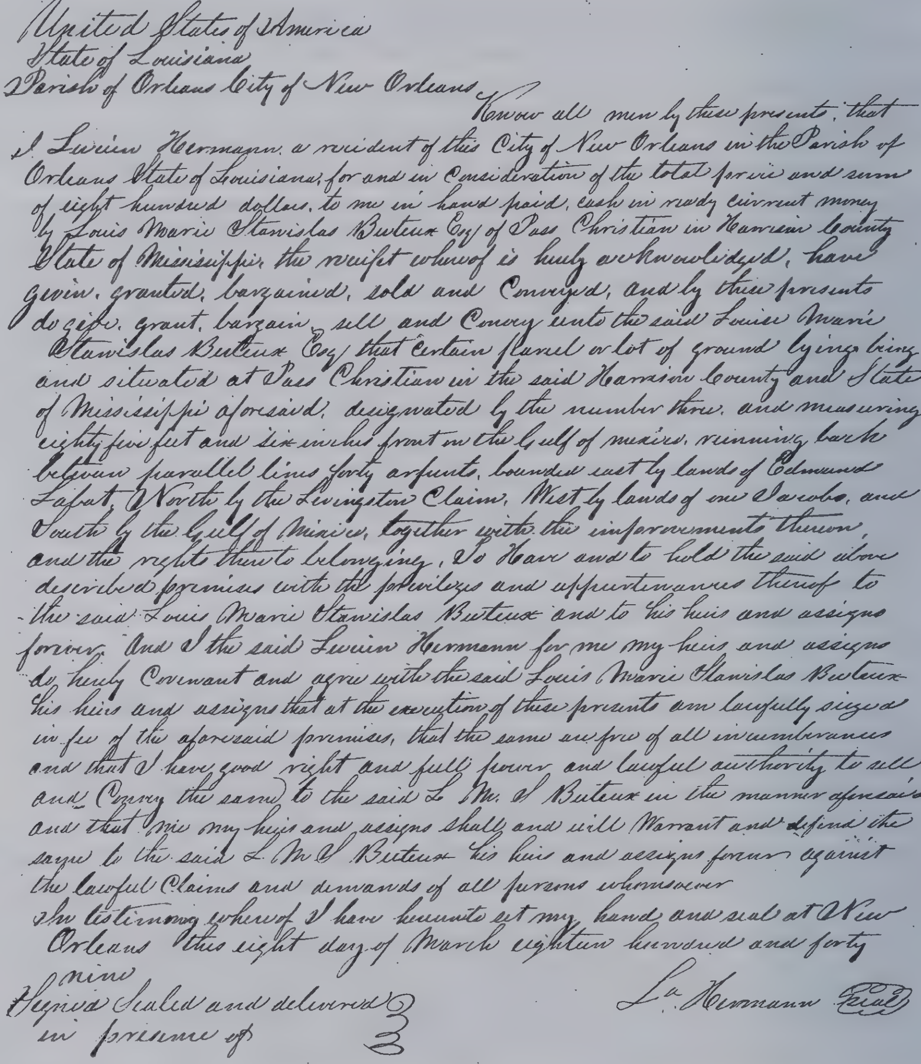
[2] Father Labbé had previously laid the cornerstone of the Church of the Nativity of the Blessed Virgin Mary at Biloxi on Sunday, August 6, 1843.

[3] "Catholicity in Mississippi", Bishop R.O. Gerow, 1939, p. 154

The original church property was land locked. Access to Front Road at the Beach, required an alley-way access with a six foot easement. This is reported to be the present widened St. Paul Avenue. On May 8, 1849, Father Buteux secured a better site for a new Church, which was 85 1/2 foot fronting on the Beach. Therefore, the first property was returned to Edward Saucier.

Traveling Missionary Priests frequently made trips into the Coastal area providing Mass, Marriages and Baptisms. **The earliest baptism document** found for Pass Christian before the St. Paul mission was established was performed by Father Acquaroni on September 23, 1823 for Justin Lassabe, son of André "Bertrand" Lassabe and Lucille Saucier, (daughter of Phillipe Saucier).



United States of America
State of Louisiana
Parish of Orleans City of New Orleans

Know all men by these presents, that I Lucien Hermann a resident of the City of New Orleans in the Parish of Orleans State of Louisiana, for and in Consideration of the total price and sum of eight hundred dollars, to me in hand paid, cash in ready current money by Louis Marie Stanislas Buteux Esq of Pass Christian in Harrison County State of Mississippi the receipt whereof is hereby acknowledged, have given, granted, bargained, sold and Conveyed, and by these presents do give, grant, bargain, sell and Convey unto the said Louis Marie Stanislas Buteux Esq that certain parcel or lot of ground lying being and situated at Pass Christian in the said Harrison County and State of Mississippi aforesaid, designated by the number three, and measuring eighty five feet and six inches front on the Gulf of Mexico, running back between parallel lines forty arpents, bounded east by lands of Edmund Lafat, North by the Livingston Claim, West by lands of one Jacobs, and South by the Gulf of Mexico, together with the improvements thereon, and the rights thereto belonging, To Have and to hold the said above described premises with the privileges and appurtenances thereof to the said Louis Marie Stanislas Buteux and to his heirs and assigns forever. And I the said Lucien Hermann for me my heirs and assigns do hereby Covenant and agree with the said Louis Marie Stanislas Buteux his heirs and assigns that at the execution of these presents am lawfully seized in fee of the aforesaid premises, that the same are free of all incumbrances and that I have good right and full power and lawful authority to sell and Convey the same to the said L. M. S. Buteux in the manner aforesaid and that me my heirs and assigns shall and will Warrant and defend the same to the said L M S Buteux his heirs and assigns forever against the lawful Claims and demands of all persons whomsoever

In testimony whereof I have hereunto set my hand and seal at New Orleans this eight day of March eighteen hundred and forty nine

Signed Sealed and delivered
in presence of

Lu. Hermann Seal

This document from the Gulfport Courthouse is a copy of the original land purchase enacted on March 8, 1849, from Lucien Hermann by Rev. Father Louis Marie Stanislaus Buteux. This Church lot is still included in the present expansive St. Paul Parish properties.

Pass Christian received its first resident priest in the person of Rev. Antoine Paul Guerard in May 1850. He started building the "first" Parish Church, which was completed in 1851, and also dedicated the first Catholic cemetery grounds the year before.

"The Church was a small wooden structure devoid of all decoration. Above the door was a carved statue of Our Lady, who sweetly smiled down on those who entered the Church so quaintly called "*Janua Coeli.*" The congregation was almost entirely composed of families of the captains and the crews of the boats plying between New Orleans and the other towns on the coast, besides the children of the fishermen who scoured the Gulf for the delicious oysters, crabs and shrimps." [4]

- In July of 1853, Bishop James Oliver Van de Velde was appointed the Second Bishop of the Diocese of Natchez. He died of Yellow Fever in 1855.

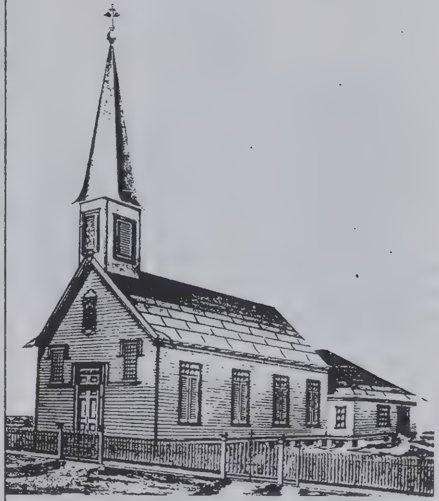
In May 1853, at the "Pass", Father Guerard was replaced by Rev. Peter Holton who was assisted by Father Bernard O'Hara.

- Most Rev. William Henry Elder had been appointed as the third Bishop for the Natchez Diocese in 1857.

However, the Yellow Fever epidemic of 1858, caused Father Holton's health to steadily decline, resulting in Father Picherit and later Father Leduc of Bay St. Louis, to assist the "Pass" parishioners during Father Holton's absences. At that time, the Catholic community in the "Pass" consisted of approximately one hundred people.

Rev. Francis Pont succeeded for the years 1863 through 1867, when he began an expansion and building program which resulted in the acquisition of lands to the rear of the church property for a priest's house. Under his administration in 1866 he witnessed the opening of St. Mary's College for boys, operated by the Christian Brothers Order. He also built the first parish school for girls, extended the Cemetery, and erected several churches in neighboring communities.

As reported in an article of the New Orleans Times, "Under the wise administration of the world-wide Society who know well how to sweeten labor with recreation and smooth over the hours of toil by hours of enjoyment, Pass Christian College has grown and prospered, till now its name has reached beyond the seas, and youths even from Spain have sought its threshold." [5]



"Janua Coeli"
Door of Heaven
Upon the second property site acquisition of Father Buteux, a new Parish Church was built in 1851 by Rev. A. Paul Guerard. This replaced the Mission Church which had been built by Father Labbé in 1844. *Janua Coeli* burned down on February 24, 1876.

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[4] Sisters of Mercy in Mississippi, Mother Mary Bernard, page 30

[5] New Orleans Times, Sunday, May 27, 1867

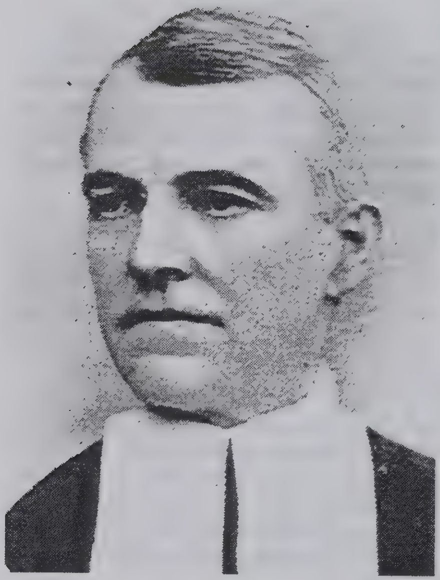
The Pastorate was then turned over to Rev. Henry Georget for the period January 1868 to January 1880. He continued the expansion program of his predecessor by obtaining three Sisters of Mercy to teach the girls of the Parish in 1870. In satisfying Father Georget's request, Bishop Elder gave sanction to obtain the services of Sister Mary Vincent Browne, Sister M. Aloysius Houck, and Sister M. Berchmans Petit for the teaching ministry. Upon coming to Pass Christian, they were settled into a four room cottage on Second Street and opened a school for girls with thirty students. Thus, it was, that St. Joseph School became the second oldest Catholic school in the Diocese. Father Georget also acquired new property to build a permanent convent for the Sisters, which became the second convent for the Sisters of Mercy in Mississippi.

The first three Sisters of Mercy arrived at Pass Christian in 1870. Their first school enrollment was a total of 30 girls.

Sister Mary Vincent loved to recall their first encounter in January of 1870, just having arrived at the Pass and greeted by Father Georget at the little Convent.

"Father Leray had escorted the three Sisters from Vicksburg to New Orleans and boarded vessels to the Pass. During the first night, upon inquiring of the Sister's Chapel, Father Georget replied that the Church was just several steps out the back door of the Convent. At this, Father Leray arose from his seat and sternly remarked, "You must give my Sisters a Chapel, no matter how small, or I will take them back with me in the morning!" Needless to say, the Sisters were given their Chapel. Thus, the first Branch House for the Sisters of Mercy was established outside of Vicksburg." [6]

During the Depression years, which followed the Civil War, Pass Christian suffered many losses. This included the Christian Brother's College, which was forced to close in 1875. Father Georget personally financed the education for the remaining boys with Father Joachim's able training. In 1876, the Sisters of Mercy took over instructions of the boys, thus, taking in almost all of the eligible boys and girls since there was no public school available at that time. A devastating fire occurred on February 24, 1876, which leveled the Church along with adjacent buildings. With a remarkable display of courage, the "sisters worked heroically to save the sacred vestments, sacred vessels, altar linens and pictures." [7]



Brother Maurelian, Vice President of Christian Brother's College, was stricken by Yellow Fever along with many other Brothers. While caring for his sick fellowmen, many of whom died, he studied the fever, and later developed the cure for Yellow Fever world-wide.

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[6] "Sisters of Mercy in Mississippi", Mother M. Bernard, 1931, p. 32

[7] "Sisters of Mercy in Mississippi", Mother Bernard, 1931, p. 35

St. Paul Church Established

Diminishing attendance at Masses after the fire resulted in Sunday collections being less than a dollar. This caused the distressed Father Georget to turn to friends elsewhere, which accounted for donations of more than a thousand dollars. These funds were used for construction of the "second" Catholic Church. The new church was completed in 1879 and was dedicated to St. Paul.

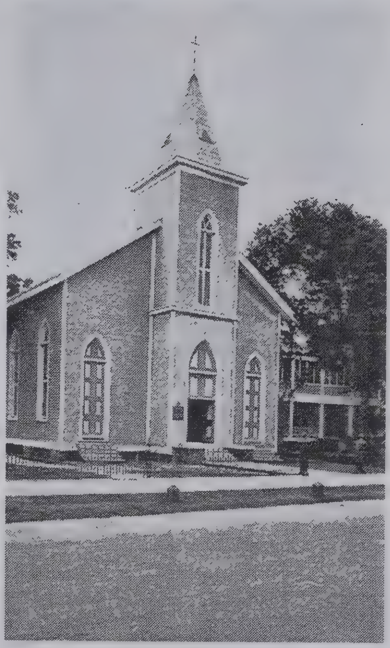
Local residents also made their contributions, such as Lawrence Fallan, who donated the church bell; and Mr. Conery, who donated the crucifix, which was shipped in from France. Frank Wittmann, hailing from Eltmann, Germany, built the center altar. As time passed, the aging Father Georget became ill, even as he continued to administer to the neighboring churches at Handsboro, and the Wolf and Jourdan River communities.

- The Fourth Bishop of Natchez, was the Most Rev. Francis Janssens, appointed in 1880. However, he did not arrive until June 11, 1881, barely in time to dedicate the new church at the "Pass" on June 13th.

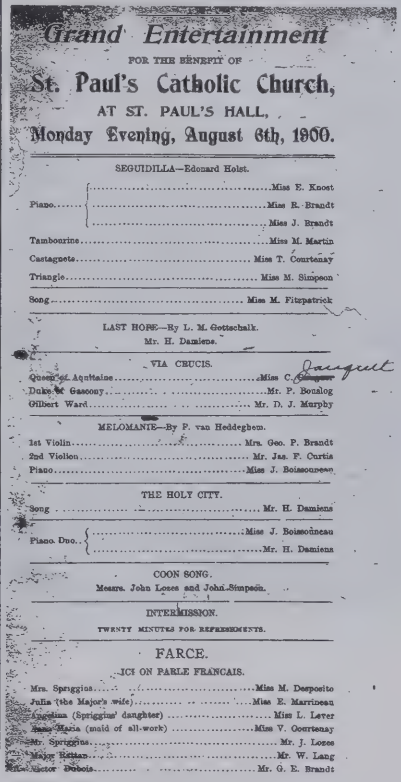
Rev. Florimond Joseph Blanc succeeded Father Georget in 1880, remaining for the next ten years. His first priority was to supervise the completion of the Church's interior including a new altar, which was designed and built by Frank Wittmann, Sr. On April 11, 1882, Father Blanc combined the boys' and girls' schools with the name of St. Joseph's School and built a Sister's residence on newly acquired property. As a prudent financier, he continued expansions, as well as continuing substantial collections; thereby leaving the Parish free of debt upon his transfer in 1890.

- The Fifth Bishop of the Diocese of Natchez, was the Most Rev. Thomas Heslin, appointed in 1888.

On Father Blanc's transfer, the new pastor, Rev. Victor Balley, had already been well known by the Catholic parishioners. He served as its pastor for six years from October 1890 through July of 1896, during which time, he gave immediate attention to opening a combined school-hall. This was dedicated on June 13, 1892. Father Balley was followed by the Rev. Aloise Van Waesberghe who served from September 1896 to June of 1903. During Father Aloise' tenure the first 50-year Jubilee period was completed.



The "Second" Parish Church replaced the older one in 1879 due to a devastating fire in 1876. The new Church was dedicated to St. Paul by Father Georget.



Grand Entertainment

FOR THE BENEFIT OF

St. Paul's Catholic Church,

AT ST. PAUL'S HALL,

Monday Evening, August 6th, 1900.

SEGUIDILLA—Edonard Holst.

Piano......Miss E. Knost
Miss R. Brandt
Miss J. Brandt
Tambourine......Miss M. Martin
Castagnets......Miss T. Courtenay
Triangle......Miss M. Simpson

Song......Miss M. Fitzpatrick

LAST HOPE—By L. M. Gottschalk.
Mr. H. Damiens.

VIA CRUCIS.
Queen of Aquitaine......Miss C. Jauquet
Duke of Gascony......Mr. P. Bonslog
Gilbert Ward......Mr. D. J. Murphy

MELOMANIE—By P. van Heddeghem.
1st Violin......Mrs. Geo. P. Brandt
2nd Violion......Mr. Jas. F. Curtis
Piano......Miss J. Boissonneau

THE HOLY CITY.
Song......Mr. H. Damiens

Piano Duo......Miss J. Boissonneau
Mr. H. Damiens

COON SONG.
Messrs. John Lozes and John Simpson.

INTERMISSION.
TWENTY MINUTES FOR REFRESHMENTS.

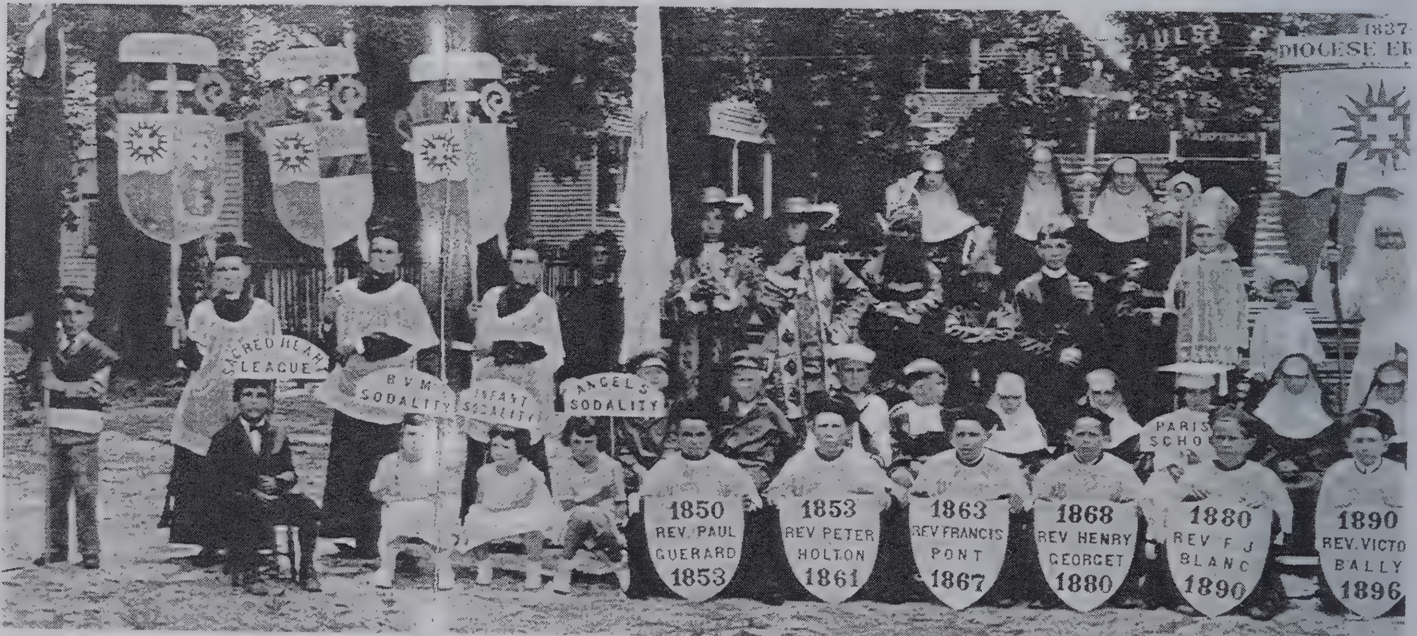
FARCE.
ICI ON PARLE FRANCAIS.
Mrs. Spriggins......Miss M. Desposito
Julia (the Major's wife)......Miss E. Marrineau
Angelina (Spriggins' daughter)......Miss L. Lever
Anna Maria (maid of all-work)......Miss V. Courtenay
Mr. Spriggins......Mr. J. Lozes
Major Rattan......Mr. W. Lang
Victor Dubois......Mr. G. E. Brandt

The Second Fifty Year Jubilee begins -- 1897

In 1903, the Rev. Auguste Althoff succeeded Father Aloise as Pastor. He directed Frank Wittmann, Sr., (second generation Wittmann) to build the new rectory in 1904 and added stain glass windows and a new sacristy to the rear of the church. New Stations of the Cross were added to the walls. The rectory was made comfortable to accommodate visiting bishops as well as priests who escaped the cold winters. He also made improvements to the school buildings. But since the church was built to seat only 500, he was faced with ever increasing over-crowded conditions. During summer months, visitors competed for seating in the crowded pews.

Negroes had been members of the St. Paul congregation from the beginning; however, the lack of seating capacity as well as the continued growth of the Negro population resulted in the need for a separate church. In remedy, Bishop Heslin invited the St. Joseph's Society for Colored Missions to take care of Catholic Negroes on the Gulf Coast. Rev. Severinus Wiersma was sent to the "Pass" to establish a new apostolate.

In 1920, **St. Joseph's School** celebrated its *Golden Jubilee.* The panoramic photos below depict the early history of Catholicism in Pass Christian and the Diocese by signaling each Pastor and each Bishop and even costumed Indians and the brothers Iberville and Bienville.

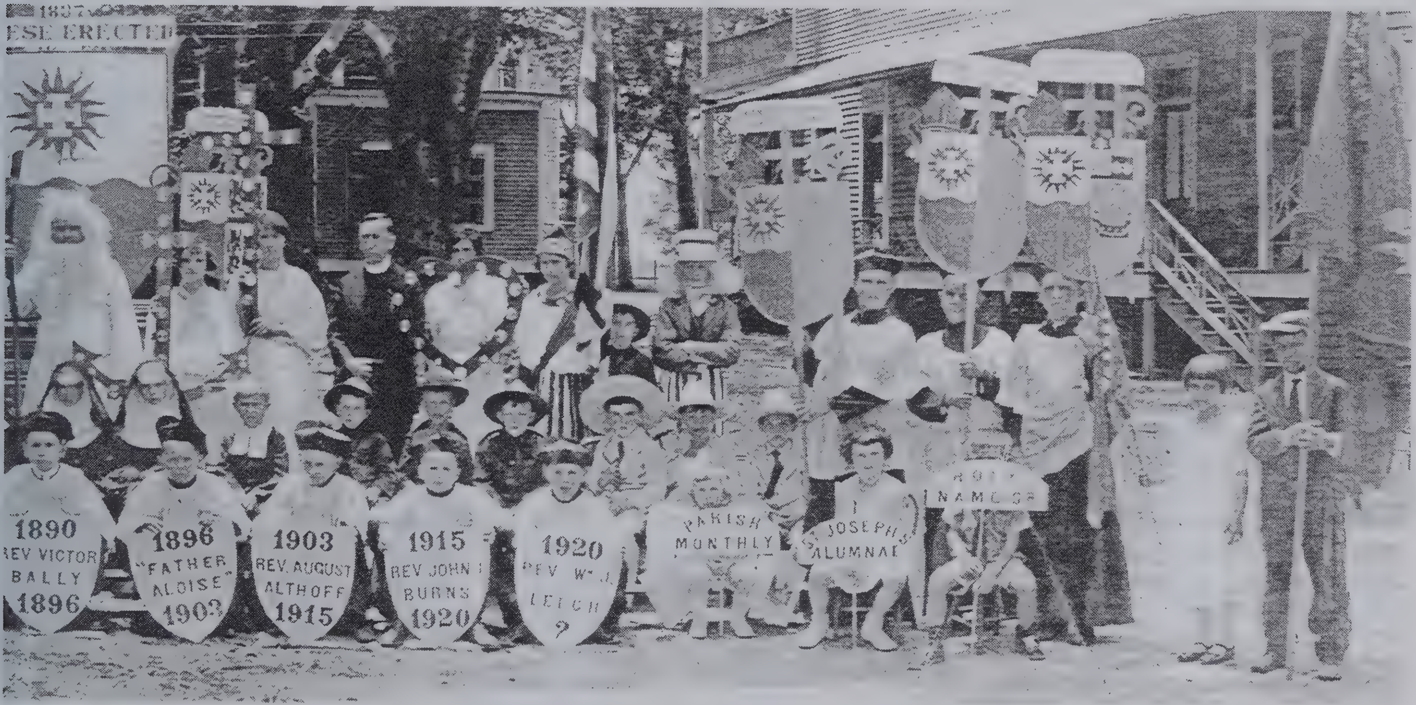

SACRED HEART
LEAGUE
B V M
SODALITY
INFANT
SODALITY
ANGELS
SODALITY
AULS
1837
DIOCESE E
PARIS
SCHO
1850
REV. PAUL
GUERARD
1853
1853
REV PETER
HOLTON
1861
1863
REV FRANCIS
PONT
1867
1868
REV HENRY
GEORGET
1880
1880
REV F J
BLANC
1890
1890
REV. VICTO
BALLY
1896

A two acre site was purchased from J.H. Knost, and on March 5, 1911, the new church was completed. With the erection of St. Philomena, Rev. Sam Kelly became its first pastor, succeeded by Rev. Luke Plunkett, and then by Rev. Stephen G. Sweeney. A new school building was opened on January 5, 1921, staffed by Sisters of the Holy Ghost of San Antonio, Texas. With this growth, further construction continued with a new convent and a new rectory. [8]

- The Sixth Bishop of the Diocese of Natchez, the Most Rev. John Edward Gunn, was appointed in 1911.

Father Althoff was persuaded to take a sabbatical sick leave in March of 1915, thereby leaving the church without its pastor, and no replacement. Bishop Gunn himself made an interim move to the "Pass" in order to officiate. In April 1915 he appointed Father John Burns as administrator, who served until October of 1920. Bishop Gunn, however, remained for a few years longer at the "Pass", frequently referring to himself as a "*Missionary Bishop*". During his administration, many chapels were erected providing every Catholic in Mississippi the opportunity to attend Mass at least once a month without requiring a great distance of travel.

Without a priest to appoint as Pastor, **Bishop John Edward Gunn**, himself, moved his stately office to Pass Christian for several years. Thus, **the "Pass" became Diocesan headquarters** for a period of time.



1837
ESE ERECTED
1890 REV VICTOR BALLY 1896
1896 "FATHER ALOISE" 1903
1903 REV. AUGUST ALTHOFF 1915
1915 REV JOHN BURNS 1920
1920 REV W. J. LEIGH ?
PARISH MONTHLY
ST. JOSEPH'S ALUMNAE
HOLY NAME SO

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[8] "Catholicity in Mississippi", Bishop R.O. Gerow, 1939, p. 175

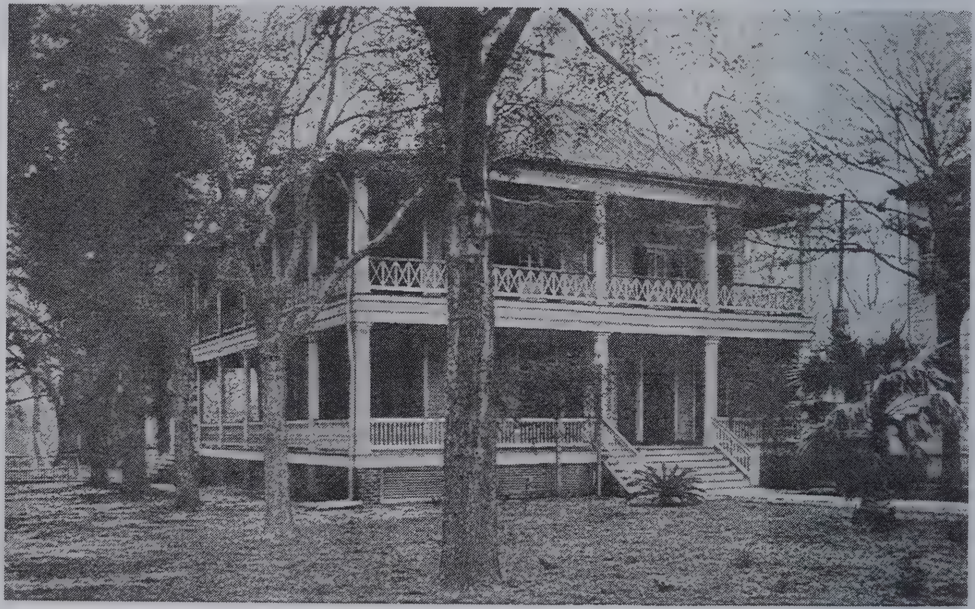
On October 3rd, a severe hurricane toppled the St. Paul church spire causing it to crash through the roof. Reconstruction of the damaged buildings were completed, and concrete walkways were also laid to all buildings in the complex.

On January 11, 1920, St. Joseph's School celebrated its Golden Jubilee, at which time, Bishop Gunn complimented the good Sisters of Mercy for their continued devotion to Catholicity and education on the Gulf Coast. "Above all, the Sisters have endeared themselves to the families of the "Pass" by their tender devotion to the sick and their unfailing presence in the hour of sorrow. . . . especially was this true in those dark days of the epidemic, in the summer of 1878, when two Sisters were left behind and helped to relieve the spiritual and temporal needs of the community. It seemed providential that Sister Euphrasia and Sister Patricia were quarantined here during those trying times. . . . but, stories are yet current of the heroism of these two *Angels of Mercy* during the scourge of yellow fever." [9]

The Rev. William J. Leech was appointed administrator from October 12, 1920 through July 20, 1925. He became pastor from July 20, 1925 until July 22, 1937.

Quoting from the Tarpon Beacon of May 1923: "The children of the parish and many adults were in attendance each morning during May devotions and the altar was kept beautifully decorated with the choicest of flowers." [10]

Rev. William Leech served St. Paul Parish first as Administrator and then as its Pastor from 1920 to 1937.



St. Joseph's Convent housed the Sister's of Mercy in a small building of four rooms, which later was moved to Front Street and was added to over the years. In 1903, Pass resident, Miss Ellen Curran, bequeathed half the proceeds of her home to the Convent. The funds were used to build the second story and to renovate the Chapel.

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[9] "Diamond Jubilee. 1851 --- 1926". St. Paul's Parish, 1926, p. 48

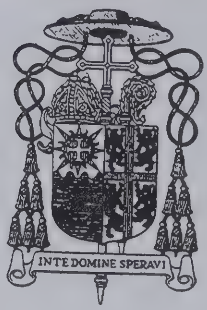
[10] "The Billy Bourdin Historical Collections"

- The Seventh Bishop of the Diocese of Natchez was the Most Rev. Richard Oliver Gerow. Bishop Gerow compiled one of the few Catholic historical documents, but limited it to only 250 copies. Entitled "*Catholicity of Mississippi*", it still remains a major historical publication, more so, because so many church records have been lost over the years.

On the scroll of the coat of arms of His Excellency Bishop Gerow of Natchez, was the Latin motto: "*In te Domine speravi*," which means, "***In Thee, O Lord, I have hoped.***"

At Natchez, on October 19, 1937, Bishop Gerow celebrated the centennial observance of the Diocese. A ceremonial display included the famous gold ornamental chalice and the crosier given to Bishop Chanche by Pope Gregory XVI in 1837. These historic pieces are preserved in St. Mary's Cathedral at Natchez and are used to commemorate special feasts of observance.

The Rev. Thomas Hayes was named pastor of St. Paul Church on July 1, 1937, and remained until May 1949. A sub-headline of the Tarpon Beacon on July 3, 1937, stated, "*Rev. Thomas Hayes Comes Here*" -- the article continued, "Rev. Hayes ... comes to us very highly recommended. We know he will receive a warm welcome . . . Already a grand farewell party is being arranged for Father Leech -- also a reception (will be held) for incoming priest, Rev. Hayes." [11] During Father Hayes' pastorship, he pursued the Parish's continued growth. Of note is the tomb where he was buried in St. Paul's Cemetery. His burial plaque is located across from the entombment of the ten Christian Brothers who had died in 1867-68 due to the plague of Yellow Fever that brought distress to many Coastal communities.



In Te Domine Speravi

Bishop Richard Oliver Gerow compiled the first early history of Catholicism in the State, known as "*Catholicity in Mississippi.*"

The Third Fifty Year Jubilee begins -- 1947

The Rev. James Curley was appointed Administrator in 1949 and served until February 1950. In May of 1949, the Jesuits acquired the former Victorian home, at that time, known as the Grey Castle Hotel, located at Scenic Drive and Menge Street. It was converted to a retreat home, called Xavier Hall. Among those taking residency for the Catholic Order, were wonderful, giving clerics, such as; Father Wagner, Rev. A.J. Achee, Rev. Leo Dowling and Rev. Edward A. Sheridan.

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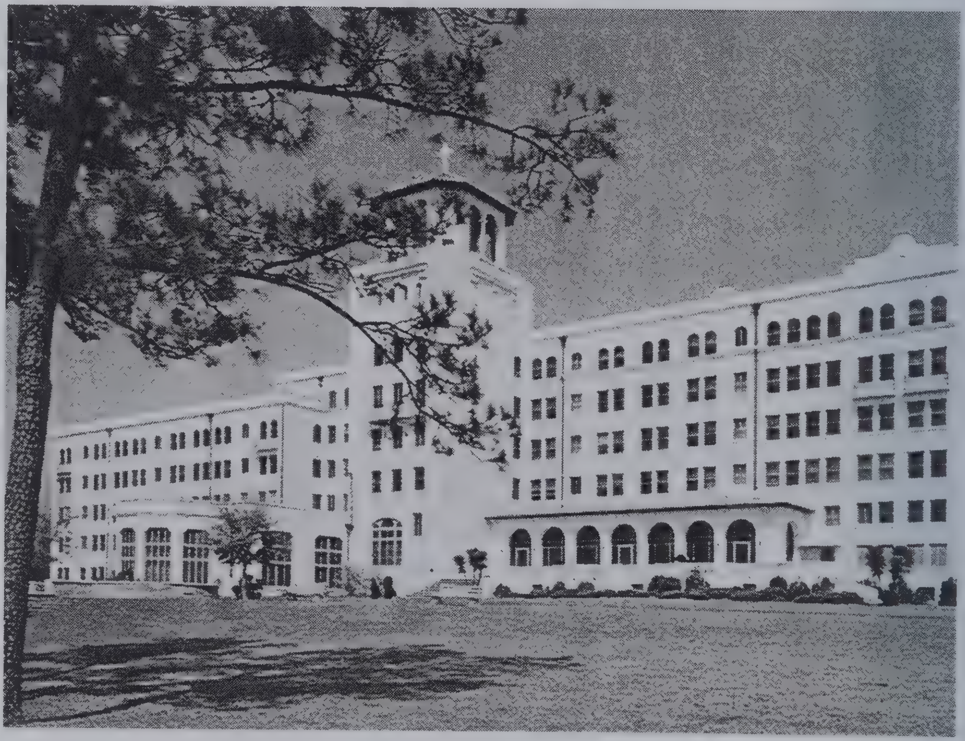
[11] "The Billy Bourdin Historical Collections"

Rev. James Patrick McGlade was born at Maghera, Derry, Ireland. He rests his last sleep here in St. Paul Cemetery.

In January 1950, the Rev. James P. McGlade was announced as the new pastor. He witnessed his first marriage on February 18th, with the vows of Billy Bourdin and Inez Pavolini.

In 1953, the adjoining property on St. Paul Avenue was purchased, allowing the school yard along Second Street to be fenced in, providing necessary security for the children. Volunteer coaches in charge of the "Pee Wee" Team were H.W. Griffon and Shannon Pickich. Father McGlade always included the resident priests at Xavier Hall to participate in religious and social events sponsored at St. Paul's Church and St. Joseph's School. The new auditorium-gymnasium was completed in 1956, with its first function organized by the St. Joseph Alumni Carnival Association. Some of the annual events taking place during the "50s" were: an annual *May Crowning* of the statue of Mary, the July *St. Paul Bazaar*, (which originated during the 1930s) and the annual *Halloween Carnival*, which emphasized costume contests and entertainment.

Pass Christian hosted the 36th Annual Mississippi Federated Mercy Alumni meeting on October 19-20, 1957. At a reception in St. Paul's gym, the Most Rev. Bishop R.O. Gerow of the new Natchez-Jackson Diocese was honored and entertained by a Quartet of Oblates from the Pine Hills Seminary at DeLisle. On Sunday morning he



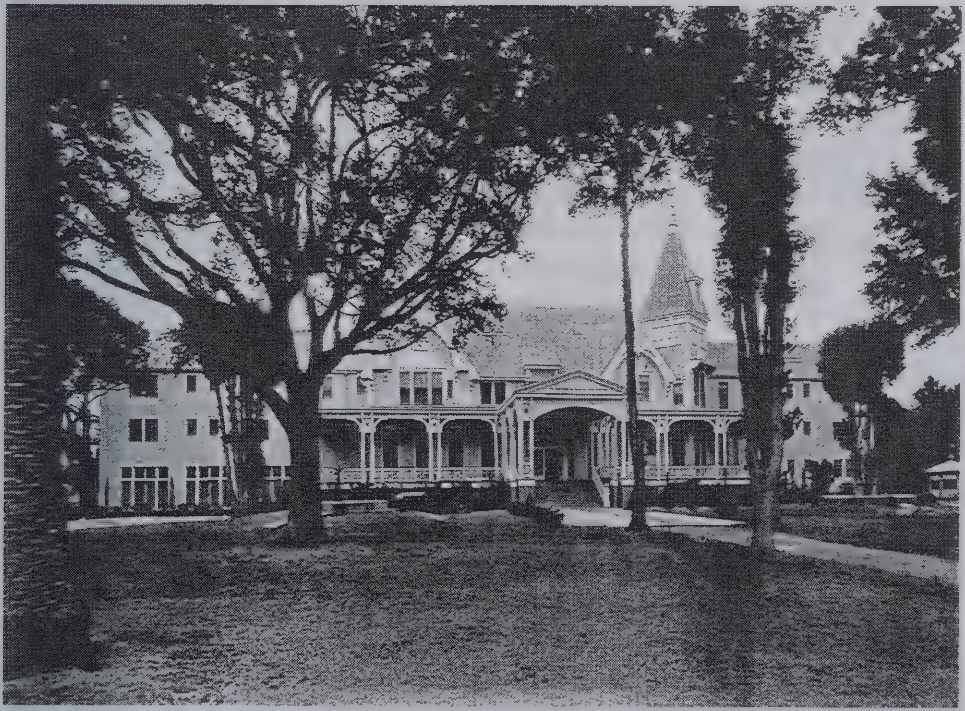
Pine Hills

In 1953, the former Pine Hills Hotel at DeLisle was converted to a seminary to train priests of the Oblate Fathers, Our Lady of Snows Scholasticate. The transformed hotel became a religious sanctuary where the small chapel was jammed full on Christmas midnight mass for the 15 year period of its existence. The former sanctuary site is now part of the Dupont Chemical Complex.

celebrated Mass at the St. Paul Church, and later he was guest speaker at the Mercy Alumni luncheon held at the Pass Christian Yacht Club. Bishop Gerow bestowed commendations upon its founder, Mother Catherine McAuley and the Sisters of Mercy. He acknowledged the 125-year old Order, which was founded in Ireland in 1831. Continuing with entertainment, the Oblate Brothers formed an Octet ensemble to sing *The Menu Song* and *The Song of the Mosquito*.[12]

Even though Pastors were rotated to other Parishes, it was often that they would return to celebrate special holidays in the Pass. Here are Fathers, Rev. John Burn, Rev. Thomas Hayes and Rev. John Gasper, SVD.

The Oblate Seminary was established at Pine Hills, then located in the former hotel located at DeLisle along the northern shore of Bay St. Louis, which is now the site of the Dupont Chemical Plant. It was operated by the Oblates of Mary Immaculate Religious Order. The Pass also attracted more Catholic clerics to the Coast when the Grey Castle Hotel in the 900 block of East Scenic Drive was acquired. The Grey Castle opened its doors in 1929, before becoming a Retreat Home for vacationing and retiring priests. In 1957, the Jesuit's of New Orleans occupied part of the large edifice as a temporary home for the Provincial Superior and his staff. After the Jesuits moved out, Xavier Hall, as it was called, continued as a Retreat Home and the Oblates from Pine Hills moved in following the Camille damage to their Bay area facility at DeLisle. Xavier Hall was eventually sold and torn down for replacement by a private residence.



Xavier Hall

The beautiful edifice of the Grey Castle Hotel, formerly at the site of 900 East Scenic Drive, was opened in 1929. Upon its closing, the Jesuits's of New Orleans acquired the buildings for a Retreat Home. Many of the clergy who stayed there, also expanded the instruction in classes at St. Joseph's Academy.

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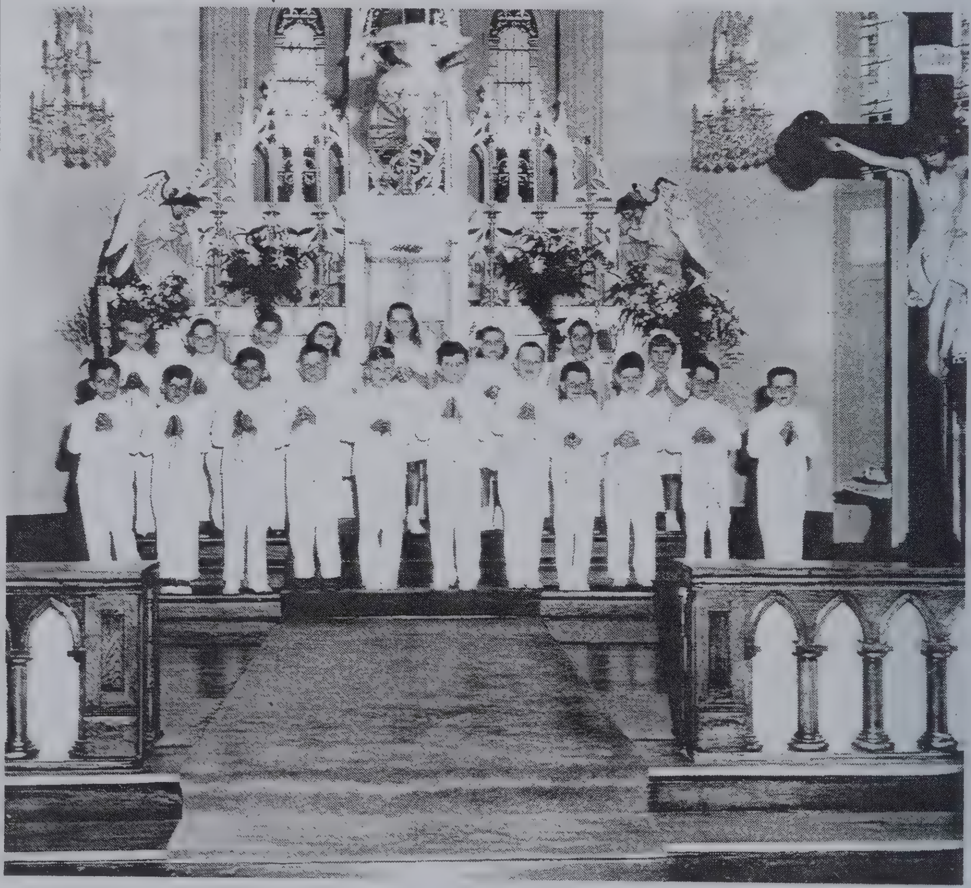
[12] "Billy Bourdin Historical Collections", Tarpon-Beacon, October 24, 1957

As a result of the Brothers in training at Pine Hills and the Jesuits and Fathers in "retreat" at Xavier Hall, the Catholic churches throughout the area were benefitted by many members of the Clergy, many of whom performed Mass in meeting their holy obligations.

In 1957, the Most Rev. Joseph B. Brunini was named auxiliary bishop for the Diocese.

In January 1961, the Sisters of Mercy were praised by the Lions Club, whose members honored them as recipients of the "Citizens of the Year" award. Mother M. Bertrand, in accepting the award for her little flock of Sisters, cited: "This is the first time in our history that something like this has been done for us . . . and a most wonderful thing that has happened . . ." In turn, the Sisters gave a reception of gratitude in honor of the Lions Club membership, including all other Pass Christian civic and social clubs.[13]

In 1962, the Most Rev. Joseph B. Brunini arrived at Pass Christian to turn the first shovel of earth at the ground breaking ceremony for the new, modern St. Paul school building project.



First Communion Class - May 1, 1949

Top Row: Herman McArthur, Johnny McDonald, Leonard Ladner, Rose Vetter, Madalin Fayard, Peggy Harshbarger, Ann McDonald, Linda Ladner.

Bottom Row: Ronnie Cuevas, Donald Malini, James Dubuisson, Ambrose Ruspoli, George McDonald, Jr., Robert DeMetz, Laray Schruff, Billy McCollister, Arthur Cagle, Teddy Netto, Harry Bishop

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[13] "Billy Bourdin Historical Collection", Tarpon Beacon, Jan 1961.

With the arrival of Rev. Patrick Grant, a reception was given in his honor in May 1962. He continued as assistant Pastor through 1963 succeeding Father McGlade as St. Paul's Parish Pastor in March of 1964. In August of 1964, Bishop Gerow named the Rev. John Egan as assistant Pastor.

- In 1967, the Most Rev. Joseph B. Brunini was elevated from auxiliary bishop to become the 8th Bishop of the Diocese. On July 19, 1967, the Sisters of Mercy of Vicksburg ended their 97 years of service to St. Paul Parish. That Religious Order was soon replaced by the Congregation of the Sisters of Mercy from Ireland.

In March 1968, Father Grant announced that the newly acquired East Beach Harbor Shop building would be converted and renovated for a new Sisters of Mercy Convent. The frame building was renovated with brick veneer while maintaining its historic front facade in traditional southern architecture. The first floor was redesigned, providing a chapel, music room, office, dining room, kitchen and laundry. The second floor accommodated a community room and six bedrooms with baths.

Father Grant was honored by the Parish for his five year tenure of duty at a reception in March 1969. Bishop Brunini then announced that the Rev. John T. O'Brien would succeed him as Pastor.

With the Camille disaster, it was reported that much of the Parish records and documents were lost, including historic Cemetery documents.

In January 1970, following Camille, plans were approved to raze the Church with orders to construct a new building at that same site. The Prieur Leary home at 133 East Beach, also known as the George Brandt home, was purchased for the new Rectory. During the same period, the School administration announced that its doors would remain open despite the disruption created by Camille. The opening was announced, despite all the new text books being lost while waiting delivery from the Post Office, which was also destroyed by Camille. To support the parish community, the Rev. John Gasper was welcomed as its new assistant pastor appointed by Bishop Brunini.

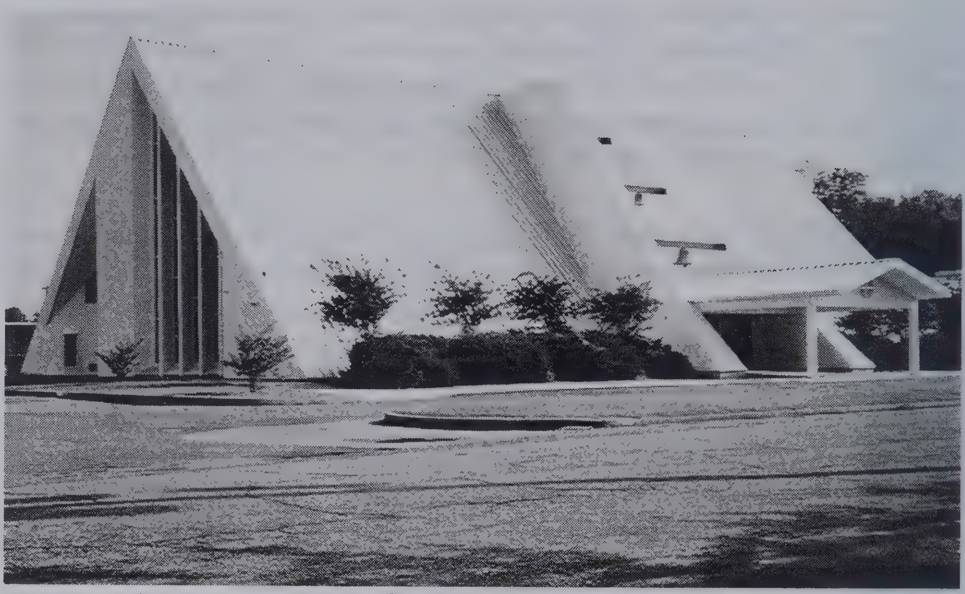
During the construction of the new church edifice, parishioners at first attended neighboring churches and later attended Mass in the school gymnasium.

Bishop Richard Oliver Gerow made many visits to the "Pass" to confer the Sacraments.

Rev. Joseph Bernard Brunini

In March 1962, then Auxiliary Bishop of Jackson, Rev. Brunini escorted the Most Rev. Archbishop Cody of New Orleans on a tour of Pass Christian.

The **St. Paul Catholic Church** was dedicated by Bishop Brunini on February 27, 1972. The entrance portico was added to the front of the Church in 1996.



The New St. Paul Catholic Church

On February 27, 1972, the Most Rev. Joseph Brunini, Bishop of Natchez-Jackson dedicated the new St Paul Catholic Church for which, a very large crowd assembled and many visiting clergy participated.

The St. Paul Catholic Church is a triangular-shaped structure with a gleaming roof rising from the ground facing a 70-foot aluminum cross of white enamel finish and the Mississippi Sound. Strength and simplicity are the primary characteristics of the new church, as it was built of steel construction with exterior walls of white stucco. The angular theme is manifested at the altar, where a sanctuary rises of carved Italian marble furnishings and appointments. A baptismal font is sunk in the floor and nearby is an electric organ in a sunken pit. The standing crucifix, rising seven feet before the altar, is made of original bronze casting. Alongside the original bell from the Hurricane Camille damaged church are two additional bells dedicated to Marion Knost and Mr. and Mrs Scott Furr. Tom Anthony served as chairman of the building committee and John Picard and Hank Rodrigue were Presidents of the St. Paul Parish Council during the rebuilding stages of the new church. [14]

In 1973, Rev. Joseph L. Howze was appointed auxiliary bishop for the Diocese of Natchez-Jackson.

St. Paul Catholic Church - Today

The new St. Paul Church displaces the old St. Paul's which served this community for almost a hundred years. It is symbolic of new life coming after the deadly destruction of the hurricane. It suggests the Christian hope of all mankind's resurrection.

The Altar, a massive Italian marble slab, and the sanctuary furnishings compose its focal point. The impressive standing crucifix stands seven feet high and shows the risen Savior in an original bronze casting designed by Irish artist, Richard Edna King. The stained-glass Stations of the Cross are presented in spiritual splendor.

With design simplicity by the architect, it is meticulously functional, hurricane-proof, and seats five hundred and fifty people.

Dedicated February 27, 1972

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[14] The Daily Herald, Sunday, February 27, 1972, p. A 6.

Northrop Stained-Glass Chapel Window
Donated by Christine Northrop is the stained glass panel which depicts the Life of Christ. The panel was originally donated to the Gulf Park College in 1963, however upon its closing in 1971, Miss Northrop made a rededication to St. Paul's Church as a memorial to Hurricane Camille victims.

● In 1977, the Rev. Joseph L. Howze was appointed Bishop of the newly established Diocese of Biloxi. One of the first parish ceremonies performed by Bishop Howze, was at the evening Mass of Saturday, July 30, 1977. He dedicated the statue of Our Lady of Guadalupe installed on the front lawn of the church. The sculptured statue was donated by the Very Rev. Herbert J. Mullin, Pastor Emeritus of St. Michael's Church, Biloxi. Construction of the concrete pyramidal base and the shrine's placement was completed by parishioner A.J. Scardino.

The 18-foot statue is the first shrine to Our Lady of Guadalupe in the Southeastern United States. It took Ocean Springs artist-sculptor, Harry Reeks, thirteen years to complete. He processed his own hand-crushed colored marble, which was poured separately into each casted mold and joined the parts to make the completed statue. Symbolically, the Golden Triangle represents the Holy Trinity; the stone encased in the base of the Pyramid is from the Tepeyac hill; and the black pyramid base represents that same hill in Guadalupe, Mexico. The stars signify Mary as Queen of Heaven; the luminous aura surrounding the figure signifies Mary's exalted position in God's plan; the Angel below the figure of Mary signifies that she is above all angels, as Mother of Jesus; and blue is a symbol for eternity and the human soul's immortality.

Father O'Brien, in relating its history, stated that Pope Pius XII had named Our Lady of Guadalupe as the *Empress of America* on October 12, 1945. He also added the following account: "This historic

"*A great sign appeared in the sky, a woman clothed with the sun, with the moon under her feet and on her head a crown of twelve stars.*" Rev. 12:1

religious revelation took place 39 years after Columbus discovered America on the morning of December 9, 1531, as the Aztec Indian, Juan Diego, was walking to attend Mass at the Franciscan Monastery. In proceeding along the rocky path atop the Tepeyac hill, he was confronted by a dazzling light from which he viewed a beautiful Lady smiling tenderly and speaking to him in his native language. Once the apparition disappeared, he ran to tell the account of the conversation to Bishop Fray Zumarraga. The Bishop, not believing him, told him that on the next visitation, to bring a sign of proof. Once more, Juan met the Lady on the rocky hill. She told him to go to the top of the hill where he would find roses blooming. Where roses had never before bloomed, he picked the roses as instructed, and returned to the Lady whereupon she arranged the flowers within his cloak. He promptly returned to the Bishop and as Juan opened his cloak, the roses dropped to the floor. The Bishop then witnessed the appearance of the image of Our Lady blazing from the cloth lining. That cloth from the year 1531, is still preserved in the Basilica of Our Lady of Guadalupe in Mexico. This miracle is described in the Book of Revelation 12:1 --- "*A great sign appeared in the sky, a woman clothed with the sun, with the moon under her feet and on her head a crown of twelve stars.*" [15]

Former resident of Pass Christian, Henry J. Ritayik, in his will, left a major portion of his enormous estate to churches and charities of which St. Paul Catholic Church was willed 28% as determined in 1981. [16] Although a multimillionaire leading a miserly and reclusive lifestyle, he established a vast land acquisition program which approximated $15 million dollars in assets. The St. Paul Elementary School dedicated the Student Library in his honor.

In February 1982, Monsignor James McGough was installed as Pastor with the Rev. Charles Venus becoming associate pastor in April of 1983.

In August 1985, the parking and storage facility was completed and is used to house school busses and to store Carnival and Seafood festival materials. In September 1985 Hurricane Elena heavily damaged the rectory brick siding and sent its roof hurtling down the street. The rectory was actually hit by two tornados; the first creating damage to one side and the second, later during the day, struck the other side, sending the roof down Scenic Drive.

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[15] Billy Bourdin Historical Collection

[16] The Daily Herald, December 24, 1981.

Ordinations

Following two years of service to the St. Paul Parish congregation as a deacon, on January 17, 1987, St. Paul's Catholic Church hosted its first ordination of a priest. The ordination of Biloxi native Ken Ramon-Landry was awash with tears as he released his pent-up emotions upon hearing *Come With Me Into the Fields* being sung by the combined choirs. His mother stated, "This is something you wait your whole life to see." When deacon Edward Bernal asked, "Will Ken Ramon-Landry, to be ordained priest, come forth?", the response was: "Present", as the young priest once more was swept with tears of joy along with all the members in the family pew. After being called, the candidate was dressed in the church vestments of a chasuble and stole and prostrated himself on the floor in turning away from his old self. Bishop Joseph Howze laid his hands upon him, anointed the new priest's hands with olive oil and balsam; presented him a chalice and paten, and he received the kiss of peace from the Bishop and the other attending clergy. Bishop Howze then completed the celebration of Mass following the ordination. [17]

Prior Ordinations of Local Clerics

In 1962, another local young man was Gene Wescovich, Jr. of DeLisle. He announced his acceptance as an Oblate seminarian to begin his studies for the priesthood at the College of Our Lady of the Ozarks. Also, in 1963, Rev. Richard Lang celebrated his 25th Year Mass. He originated his schooling in Pass Christian at St. Joseph's and later moved to Long Beach. He was ordained in 1938 and celebrated his First Solemn Mass in St. Thomas Church in Long Beach. Then in 1965, Father Gordon Saussy conducted his first Mass at St. Paul's Catholic Church. He was the grandson of former Governor Parker who lived in the "Pass" and his parents, Mr. and Mrs Walker Saussy lived on Scenic Drive. [18]

The Religious -- Sisters originating from the Pass

The early Religious included: Sister M. Borgia and Sister M. Ursula, both of whom were daughters of Mr. and Mrs. John Nelson; Sister M. Camillus Fitzpatrick, granddaughter of Mrs. Mandas; and Sister M. Bernadette (Anna) Wittmann, daughter of the first generation Frank Wittmann who had built the main altar in the "Second" Catholic Church in 1878. Also, there was Sister Caroline, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. A.T. McCollister.

In March 1962, **Most Rev. Joseph Brunini**, Auxiliary Bishop of the Diocese of Natchez-Jackson ordained six members of the community of The Oblates of Mary Immaculate of Our Lady of the Snows Scholasticate of Pine Hills. The ordination took place at St. Paul Catholic Church.

A Message from Bishop Brunini

January 6, 1972

. . . The present generation at St. Paul's can feel blessed in that they have been given the opportunity to build a home for God's dwelling on this earth of ours and a place of worship for our people.

. . . I am sure that all of us are grateful for the response of Bishops, priests, religious and laity after the disaster of Hurricane Camille, enabling us to rebuild the coastal area of our diocese.

Joseph B. Brunini, Bishop of Natchez-Jackson

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[17] "Billy Bourdin Historical Collection", The Sun Herald, January 31, 1987

[18] Wescovich and Saussy later found a secular life to be their calling.

VIETNAMESE APOSTOLATE

As the numbers of Vietnamese refugees immigrating to south Mississippi continued to grow between the 1975 fall of Saigon and the 1977 establishment of the Biloxi diocese, Bishop Howze, responding to the needs of the Vietnamese Catholic community, established the Vietnamese Apostolate in August 1977.

Upon the request of Bishop Howze, Father James Tran Manh Thang, who had fled his native land in 1975, left Oklahoma City, Oklahoma on August 8, 1977, to serve as the first director of the Vietnamese Apostolate.

Under the late Father Thang's guidance, the apostolate responded to the religious needs of the Vietnamese with the establishment of religious education programs, Catholic Youth Organizations and adult and religious choirs in Pass Christian and Biloxi. In 1985, Father Vincent Nguyen Quang Thé and Father Dominic Phan Duc Dong were appointed apostolate co-directors. [19]

This year, 1997, will be the twentieth year anniversary since the establishment of the Vietnamese Apostolate.

The Vietnamese Community consists of approximately 320 Catholic members comprised of 60 families belonging to St. Paul Church. The Apostolate has its own Parish Council and other Catholic Faith Ministries such as the Family of Fatima which is a Rosary Society and the Sao Mai choir. *Sao* means Star and *Mai* means Morning. *The Morning Star* Choir's patron is Mary, Mother of God.

Special Vietnamese holidays coincide with Christmas and the Lunar New Year during which all Vietnamese thank God for the blessings of the past year and ask for blessings for the coming year.

The Vietnamese Mass is celebrated on Sundays at 7:15 A.M.

Rev. Stephen Gabriel Sweeney
arrived in October 1919 and remained until his death in 1946. The Irish Priest, like so many other Irish Priests, remains with us in St. Paul Cemetery.

THE JOSEPHITES

The Josephites originated in England in 1871 and established their American Community in 1893 in Baltimore where its "Motherhouse" is located. The primary mission of the Josephites is to supply the needs of Negro Catholic communities and came to Pass Christian in 1911, purchased property, and built St. Philomena's Church and a school.

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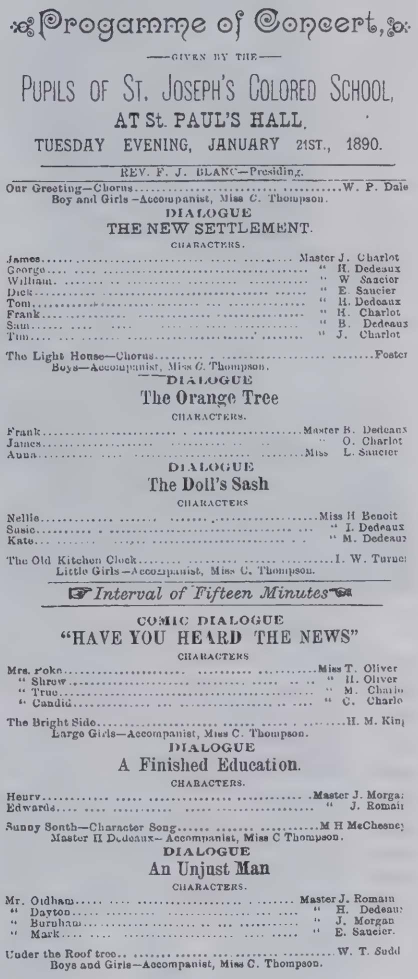
[19] Gulf Pine Catholic, Diocese of Biloxi, Vol. 5 No. 1, Sept., 4, 1987.

In the 1950s a new school building was built commemorating Father Sweeney who had been its parish pastor for many years having served from October 1, 1919 until his death in 1946. Because of the lost population to that facility, it has been changed to a Head Start program.

Before St. Philomena's Church was built, all Catholic Negroes attended St. Paul's Church. In the early days, the Sisters of Mercy had built a two room school for young Negroes to teach them elementary English and music until the Josephite Fathers took charge of the mission. At DeLisle, due to his age, on May 1, 1922, Father R.J. Sorin wrote then Bishop Gunn, appealing for relief for the care of the 200 Catholic Negroes at DeLisle and requested a separate church for them as well as the Negro community at the Delmas Dedeaux area, 13 miles northeast of Pass Christian. Father Stephen Sweeney of St. Philomena, Pass Christian was also charged with these new communities.

Other Pastors to follow were Father Cornelia Sexton, Father Vince Keenan, and currently, Father Joseph Calamari who was appointed in October 1994. Father "Joe", as his Parishioners fondly call him stated that his Catholic Faith Community consists of 225 Families composed of approximately 900 members. Renovations to the church and new stain glass windows are planned for 1997. St. Philomena's name was changed to Our Mother of Mercy.

The Josephites celebrated the first 100 year Anniversary of their arrival in the United States at the Broadwater Beach Hotel in 1993, and celebrated their 125-year Anniversary of the Order in 1996 in Baltimore.



Progamme of Concert,

—GIVEN BY THE—

PUPILS OF ST. JOSEPH'S COLORED SCHOOL,

AT St. PAUL'S HALL,

TUESDAY EVENING, JANUARY 21ST., 1890.

REV. F. J. BLANC—Presiding.

Our Greeting—Chorus .... W. P. Dale
Boy and Girls—Accompanist, Miss C. Thompson.

DIALOGUE

THE NEW SETTLEMENT.

CHARACTERS.

James .... Master J. Charlot
George .... " H. Dedeaux
William .... " W Saucier
Dick .... " E. Saucier
Tom .... " H. Dedeaux
Frank .... " H. Charlot
Sam .... " B. Dedeaux
Tim .... " J. Charlot

The Light House—Chorus .... Foster
Boys—Accompanist, Miss C. Thompson.

DIALOGUE

The Orange Tree

CHARACTERS.

Frank .... Master B. Dedeaux
James .... " O. Charlot
Anna .... Miss L. Saucier

DIALOGUE

The Doll's Sash

CHARACTERS

Nellie .... Miss H Benoit
Susie .... " I. Dedeaux
Kate .... " M. Dedeau

The Old Kitchen Clock .... I. W. Turne
Little Girls—Accompanist, Miss C. Thompson.

☞ *Interval of Fifteen Minutes* ☜

COMIC DIALOGUE

"HAVE YOU HEARD THE NEWS"

CHARACTERS

Mrs. Poke .... Miss T. Oliver
" Shrew .... " H. Oliver
" True .... " M. Charlo
" Candid .... " C. Charlo

The Bright Side .... H. M. Kin
Large Girls—Accompanist, Miss C. Thompson.

DIALOGUE

A Finished Education.

CHARACTERS.

Henry .... Master J. Morga
Edwards .... " J. Romai

Sunny South—Character Song .... M H McChesne
Master H Dedeaux—Accompanist, Miss C Thompson.

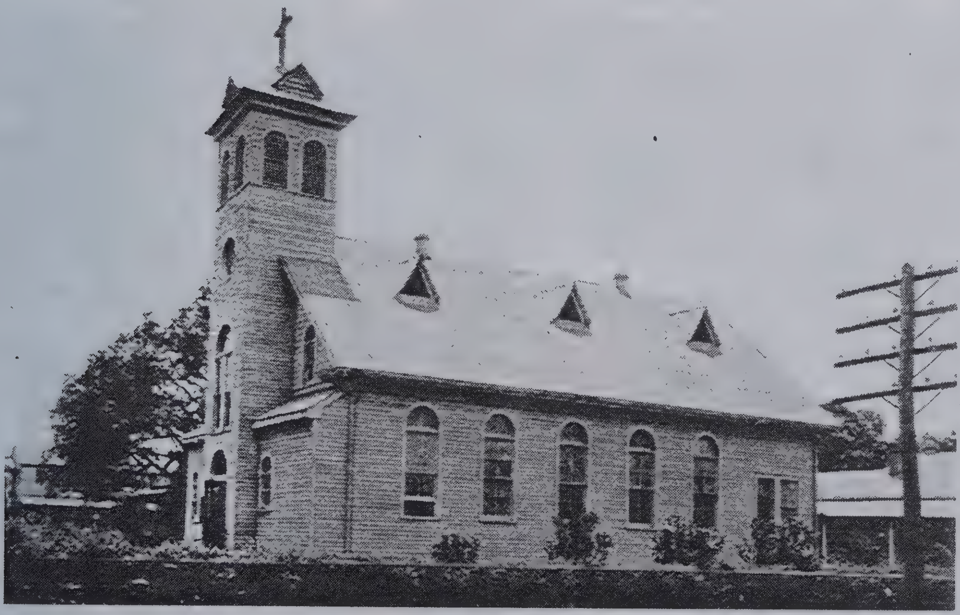
DIALOGUE

An Unjust Man

CHARACTERS.

Mr. Oldham .... Master J. Romain
" Dayton .... " H. Dedeau
" Burnham .... " J. Morgan
" Mark .... " E. Saucier.

Under the Roof tree .... W. T. Sudd
Boys and Girls—Accompanist, Miss C. Thompson.



Our Mother of Mercy

Originally named St. Philomena's Church, it is currently under renovations and is the oldest Catholic Church edifice in Pass Christian, dedicated on March 20, 1911.

Historic Church Dates

1843	First Mission Priest, Father Labbé
1844	First Mass celebrated at Mission Church
1847	First Baptisms, Parish established
1851	First Parish Church built
1876	Parish Church destroyed by Fire
1879	Second Parish Church built
1969	Camille damages
1970	Second Parish Church razed
1972	Third Parish Church built
1997	Sesquicentennial Jubilee-3 celebrated

Father Ron Herzog, Pastor and Monsignor

In 1985, Father Ron was appointed to his first six year tenure as Pastor for St. Paul Parish; and in January 1988, Bishop Joseph L. Howze of the Catholic Diocese of Biloxi announced that Father Herzog had been granted the honorary title of Monsignor. Monsignor Herzog, Father Ron as he prefers to be called, is a native of Akron, Ohio, studied at St. Joseph Seminary in St. Benedict, Louisiana and the Pontifical College Josephium in Worthington, Ohio. He was ordained a priest in 1968, and has worked at churches in Biloxi, Hattiesburg, Lumberton and Poplarville.

Solidifying and Expansion

The St. Paul Rectory -- On June 29th, 1988, Biloxi Diocese, Bishop Howze dedicated and blessed the new St. Paul Rectory following an evening Mass. A reception followed. It was noted that this was the fifth rectory during the past twenty years, two of which were temporary mobile units moved in as a result of Hurricane Camille damages to the first one and Hurricane Elena to the second.

Land Acquisition -- In 1996, the remaining vacant property South and East of Scenic Drive was purchased. This property is not only used for the Seafood Festival but provides a continuous expanse of Gulf View, adding to the St. Paul Church and School compound by providing its own milieu of a "*Parc St. Paul.*"

The Church front was modified with a new portico construction in 1996. The appended overhang protection compliments the front entranceway to the church and provides an ambiance of architectural symmetry.

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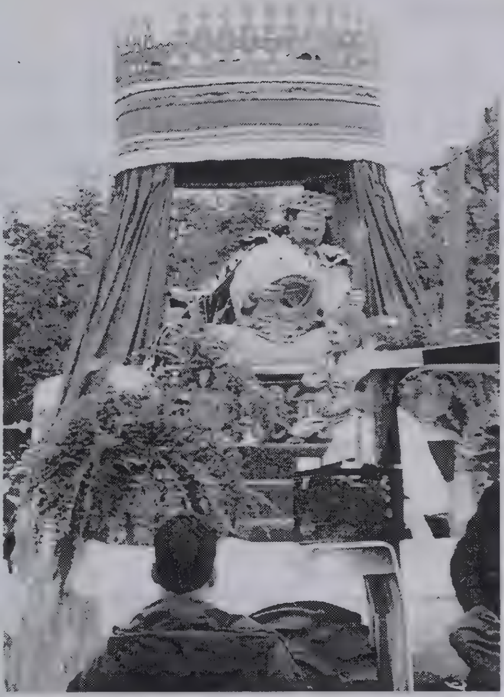


Hide-Away Places

Pass Christian has so many historically beautiful homes and wonderful residential subdivisions, that even though the town is relatively small, their are many aspects to it. Many tourists are not aware of the professionally manicured golf course greens in the woods less than a mile from the beach. There are also country estates and ranch quarters to be traveled to within short distances. Two interesting homes are below. One overlooks Bayou Johnson and Bayou Portage less than a quarter of a mile outside the City limits. It is locally known as ***The Mediterranean***, the other beautifully landscaped mansion, ***The House of Mary***, is less than a two-minute drive further north.

Castle Sherman
A Place Apart

The castle's early construction began in 1921 by James M. Sherman. Solely with the assistance of a young negro to help him pour concrete; at age 67, the horticulturist, agriculturist, and author of several books; designed the solid cement steel-reinforced castle at West Beach, Highway 90. At the time of his death, he had completed most of the structure with nine-inch thick walls.

One of his daughters, Mrs. George (Jessie) Gundlach moved from St. Louis to reside at the Castle five years after Sherman's death in 1937. Mrs. Gundlach, an accomplished oil-painter, renamed the castle to Chateau Sherman where she also installed a separate room within her home to house the crafts of the newly formed Boy Scout Troop 211, which was initiated in 1957.

As Internationalists, the Gundlachs frequently entertained foreign guests from all over the world. Often, they would invite foreign newcomers who were stationed at Keesler Air Field. In particular favor were the Korean flight officers. During a trip around the world, the Gundlachs toured Korea for two weeks while reestablishing acquaintances with the nearly 100 Republic of Korea airmen who had been guests in their Pass Christian home during the 1950s. They were awarded the "*Wings of the Air Force*" in appreciation for the International Friendship they had promoted. The Koreans dubbed the castle, the "College of International Friendship." While in Seoul, Korea they were also acknowledged by the Korean Boy Scouts for furtherance of scouting in that country and in recognition of the orphan adoption program that the Gundlachs had sponsored.

Jessie Gundlach was Mrs. International Hospitality. She wrote a poem which truly depicted her graciousness. It was entitled "*A Cup of Coffee*", epitomizing the hostess's desire to invite a select set of people to her castle. She never forgot scouting, which included Girl Scouts and Brownies, who were taught patriotism in lowering-the-flag ceremonies on the Castle's front lawn followed by singing "*America.*"

George Gundlach died at age 80 in 1968. Jessie survived him and weathered the tidal surge that passed through her sturdy Castle as she remained the night by herself during the 1969 Hurricane. In 1975, the valiant woman honored McKinley Bradley with a weekend *Garden Walk.* The Castle was opened to the public for viewing the lawns and gardens. Bradley was acknowledged for his continued service to the building, maintenance and repairs of the Castle, which he had ardently pursued for 53 years. He was the same young Negro who had helped her father, James Sherman, pour the first concrete for the Castle Sherman. In his honor, a plaque was placed on the walls, marking the theme of the Castle, **"God is my Sculptor."**

Jazz in the Pass

A Closer Walk with Thee

"Let's give it to the Captain real sweet and low," announced the Grand Marshall of the first and last Jazz funeral held in Pass Christian. The band's brass and wood instruments sounded out with *Just a Closer Walk with Thee*. The 16 piece Dixieland jazz band arrived from New Orleans with many other Jazz aficionados from Louisiana and Mississippi. Blacks and Whites came together in memorializing the man from the Pass who had just passed on to his final rest.

It was in January 1971 when the church bells tolled for Captain John Handy, Jr. who died at the age of 70 while in retirement at his little house just a few doors down from the Goodwill Baptist Church. Last rites were performed by the Reverend Pastor Calvin Jackson. The small church emptied slowly while the echoing bells were being saluted by all the other churches throughout the small downtown community of Pass Christian. The sun broke from the clouds to shine brightly and dried out the wet ground from the early morning rain. The Pass was still recovering from the disastrous effects of Hurricane Camille. The bells continued to peel in loud cadence for the better part of an hour.

As the poll-bearers hoisted the casket into a special limousine, Harold DeJean, led the world-famous Olympia Brass Band while boasting, **"We come to lay him down right . . . with the first New Orleans Jazz funeral ever held in Mississippi."**

Innovator Musician Cap'n Handy
Seated to the left of another Jazz-Great personality is John Handy of Pass Christian. Third Street, where he lived, was renamed in his honor and is now called Handy Street.

DeJean's group was all dressed in black trousers with white shirts and red arm-bands topped with white conductor hats with black brims. Most of them were Black with a few White players, none of whom were keeping a conformed stride but, nevertheless, maintained harmony and coordinated rhythms as they played softly and soulfully.

In keeping with New Orleans tradition, the ritualistic funeral caravan commenced its mile-long journey to the Trinity Church graveyard. From the Goodwill Baptist Church, the band led the hearse in a somber funeral march playing spiritual hymns while passing the small sun-bleached house on Third Street south of the tracks where Captain John Handy, Jr. had lived with his wife. The procession moved south to Second Street and turned west to Church Street.

Grand Marshall DeJean was dressed in his shiny tuxedo with his chest crossed by a sash with gleaming letters indicating the Olympia inscription. He kept his rigid but rocking strut while cradling his hat on his wrist and forearm all the way to Live Oak Cemetery.

There were almost 5000 people -- relatives, friends, fans, and on-lookers who gathered in the Pass for this funeral celebration. Many of whom, somberly followed the funeral procession in its slow, swaying and meandering path to the Cemetery.

Cap'n Handy was born in the Pass to a family filled with musicians. His mother played piano and his father had led local walking bands. His brothers and sisters also played various instruments. Captain Handy was known all over the world for his saxophone. He had played with numerous Jazz groups starting at the age of 12 until 1968. He played with the Storyville Ramblers as well as Louis Armstrong. He also performed at the famed Preservation Hall in the French Quarters and traveled the World playing stints from Japan to Europe.

Upon completing the commemoration for the Captain and on retracing the route from Live Oak, all sixteen members of the Olympia Band changed their beat and their step. Throngs of people joined in the extended "*Second Line*" while enhancing their shuffle and their strut and vigorously waving handkerchiefs or spinning umbrellas in a statement of their *Adieus* to the Captain. In memorializing him, the City of Pass Christian changed the name of Third Street at the ballpark to Handy Street in venerating the man and his talents.

John Handy, the Jazz Great

John Handy was born June 24, 1900 on Davis Avenue. When he was 12 years old he played as a percussionist in his father's band along with John Moliere on the trumpet, Frank Toles on the trombone, Willie Davies on the guitar, Selvin Thomas at bass, and John Sr. on the violin.

At 15 years, John Jr., while having learned to pluck his mandolin, formed his own band with two of his brothers, Sylvester at bass and Julius with guitar. They played the Pass and local community bars and often performed at the Mexican Gulf Hotel. Rejoining his father's band and having learned the clarinet, he met up with Tom Albert at trumpet and Charlie Watson on drums. Tom Albert formed his own band and took Handy with him to New Orleans soon after the *Storyville* in the French Quarters was closed down.

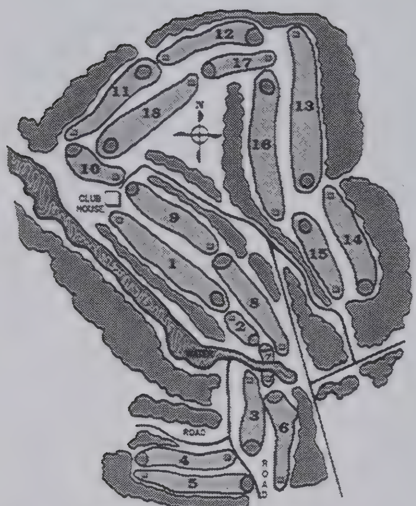
In 1928, Handy formed his own band called the "Louisiana Shakers" playing the alto-sax which included another native of the Pass, Eddie "Charlie" Watson on guitar. Handy's style favored New Orleans Jazz, but he originated a sound of his own, which was closer to "Rythym and Blues". As he became more well known, other musicians assimilated his style and his sound. His first recording didn't take place until 1960 when he was getting on with age. Having learned the clarinet, his first record was a milestone in the history of jazz. Following romps with other bands and recordings, it wasn't until 1965 and 1966 that he came into his foremost acclaim. Cap'n Handy's New Orleans Jazz played Germany, England, Japan, Canada, and South America. Some of Handy's greatest swing tunes were "Perdido", "Handy's Gulf Coast Boogie", and "One o'clock Jump". The last time he stepped into the limelight was when he performed at the Newport Jazz Festival on July 10, 1970 with the *Preservation Hall Band* and the *Eureka Brass Band*. In one of his last recordings with RCA, Louis Armstrong combined with Handy to perform "Just a Closer Walk with Thee."

Cap'n John Handy died on January 10, 1971 while in retirement at his home in Pass Christian. Although aged 70, his fame had climaxed during the final ten years of his life. The influence of his New Orleans Revival Jazz style became much more noticeable in European Jazz circles than in the United States. It was also John Handy who put the saxophone into its proper light as a mainstream Jazz sound.

Because of him, many old veterans of the sax were sought after for inclusion into the Revival Jazz sound in emulation of Handy's style. Some of these were Leroy Robinet, Louis Cottrell, Harold Dejahn, Albert Delone, Paul Barnes, Ruben Roddy and included the English musician, Sammy Rimmington and the German, Peter Müller. Famed Handy tradition numbers such as "Handy's Boogie Woogie" and "Cap's Blues" are still played the Jazz-world 'round.

Pass Chirstian Isles Golf Club

Located in the heart of Pass Christian amidst the tall yellow pines, live oaks, and magnolias, the well-kept, manicured greens of the Pass Christian Isles Golf Club, cut through the country-club environments of the TimberRidge and Pass Christian Isles communities. The 18 holes of play, can be found along natural and man-made ravines and ponds. The lovely Bayou Boisdore, *Golden Woods*, cuts its path through the fairways attended by a wooden bridge providing access across it for carts and golfers. The tree-lined fairways and well-bunkered small greens make it a challenge for golfers of all abilities. Some of the Coast's most challenging holes are encountered along the 6,480 yards of play.



Pass Christian Isles Golf Club
150 Country Club Drive, Pass Christian, MS.
Mike Burke, PGA - (601) 452-3830
U.S.G.A. Rules Govern All Play
18-holes - 6,480 yards of greens and fairways
Club House, Pro-Shop, Restaurant and Lounge

Pass Christian Isles Golf Club, Inc. was incorporated in April of 1952. Prior to that, the area abounded in wild game for local hunters and was also used as a local race track for quarter-horses. It is not unusual for our guests to find a red fox, or a young white-tail deer jauntily crossing their path. The surrounding area is a national bird sanctuary where bird-watchers frequently take photographs of the feathered and furred creatures of the surrounding woods and thickets.

Mike Burke, PGA, manages the property with a full staff of personnel in support of the pro-shop, restaurant and lounge, and groundskeeping.

Vignettes of the Pass

Coastal Living in 1847

"There are a good number of private residences and villas here, and many staid and solemn people who are perfectly satisfied to sit in their balconies to smoke their Victorias, curse their appetites, and play out in their imaginations, numerous little fishing parties." *N.O. Daily Delta*, 8/1/1847.

Public Market House in 1835

In 1835, Sheriff John Brill, who also operated a drugstore at Market Street and Front Road, dedicated a 15-foot vertical slice of his property running north-south from the Gulf shore. The same amount of right-of-way land adjoining his property was appropriated from an heir of Charles Asmard. The combined right-of-way portions provided a north-south roadway to the Back Road (Second Street) from the Gulf. This allowed farmers, sheep herders, and traders a means of accessing the Market House that Brill had built, called the Market Place.

A Racetrack in 1896

In Charles Sullivan's *"The Mississippi Gulf Coast,"* he described what a railroad executive had to say about Pass Christian in 1896. With 2200 inhabitants and a status as a tourist attraction, "the town possessed three of the coast's largest hotels, which catered primarily to Northern visitors. A Canning Factory, designed to exploit the huge oyster reef just offshore, was under construction and expected to open in the fall. The town had its own artesian waterworks, a beautiful beach drive, and a racetrack."

The Sazerac

Imagine riding along Beach Road in Pass Christian before the turn of the century and looking up to see a bright sign displaying *"The Sazerac"*. In 1895, the Saloon keeper, Roderick McIntosh, was considered a connoisseur of liquors and cigars. He named the tavern after Handy's Royal Street famed *Sazerac Saloon* in New Orleans and he was proud to equal its quality of drinks and service. The tavern was located on First Street presumably on the Gulf side near Market Street during the 1890s. McIntosh was born near Handsboro and promoted his first business with moderate success in Mississippi City, both of those towns are now incorporated in the City of Gulfport. *The Sazerac* in Pass Christian was a great success. McIntosh maintained a large inventory of imported wines, liqueurs, cordials, and choice liquors from all over. He also served the famed local Scuppernong Wine produced by Colonel Davis' winery.

The Sazerac apparently did so well that there was another opening that took place on August 20, 1907, when new owners of the *Sazerac Saloon* were issued a liquor license to operate. It was owned by two formidable citizens, Thomas Emile Schorr and Franklin Pierce Ross, who also served as members of the City Board of Aldermen.

Saloons, Bars, and Cafés of the Pass

The earliest recorded saloon that has been found while deed digging at the Harrison County Vault was a billiard hall and bar called *The Merchant's Exchange*. It was operated by Jonathan Montgomery perhaps as early as the late 1840s. He sold the business, furnishings, and liquor to John Rody. The lease was with Calvin Bradley, a Freed Man of Color. Bradley's inheritance was the property along the east side of Market Avenue, ranging from the Gulf to the Bayou Portage marshes.

A favorite restaurant name was the *Plantation Cafe,* which was used at least five times; in '56, '61, '64, '69, and '88 (the last one on Scenic Drive closed in 1995).

Existing on the fringe of the City, at Holiday Avenue and Hwy. 90, is the *Beachcomber*. That site was first opened as the *Sunrise* in the 1930s, by George and Merle Ladner. Even though two hurricanes destroyed it, in '47 and '69, it was rebuilt and called the *Waterfront,* later the *Riviera,* and once again as the *Sunrise.* It also operated under other names such as: C.Y. Thompson's, Bumstead's, Saigon, Loomis's, and the Emerald Garden.

Legal saloons were called *"Coffee Houses."* Illegal ones were known as *"Blind Tigers."*

Old Spanish Trail

By 1904, automobiles started arriving at the Pass by railway for local use. There were no conducive roadways in or out for such traffic. In 1915, at a meeting in Mobile, the concept for the Old Spanish Trail from St. Augustine, Florida to San Diego, California was launched. It was there that the Gulf Coast was included as the only saltwater stretch along the entire 2,700 mile journey connecting the two oceans. By 1925, a ribbon of asphalt followed the shore line from the Pearl River to the Alabama boundary. It was constructed as part of the Old Spanish Trail National Highway traversing the continent from St. Augustine to San Diego.

Starting in 1924, the seawall system was laid from Henderson Point to Point Cadet at Biloxi making the 24-mile-long step seawall the largest reinforced concrete structure and the longest concrete seawall in the world. It was dedicated on May 10, 1928. It was a nationally successful marketing promotion, however there was never a *Spanish Trail* traversing Mississippi or Louisiana.

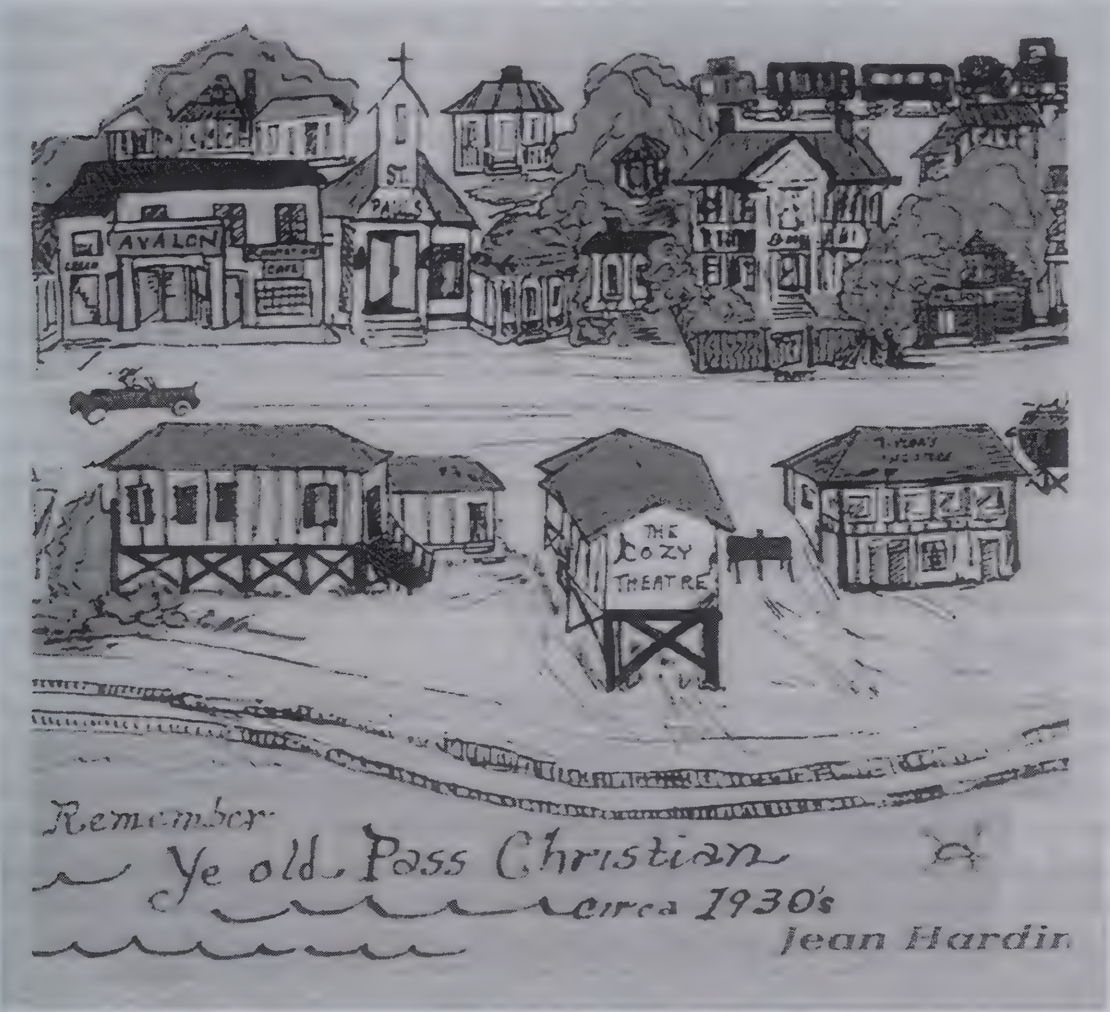
Some portions of the old Highway 90 system in Slidell and in Bay St. Louis, and Ocean Springs, even today, continue the name of "Old Spanish Trail."

Ye Ole Pass Christian

Jean Hardin's parents bought a home in Pass Christian at 729 E. Beach Boulevard in 1926. It became the family summer home for the five Hackett children as they romped the Mississippi Sound. Although the residence was sold in 1955, Jean still holds many happy memories of the Hackett family place.

"It's a tale of Rip Van Winkle," Jean states, as she glories in happiness for having moved back after a 20-year lapse. In 1975, she found that not much had changed inspite of Hurricane Camille.

With nostalgia in her heart, one day she began doodling while recalling glimpses of the way she remembered the Pass in 1930. By nightfall, the result was a wonderfully produced pen and ink panoramic sketch, which had unfolded before her. It was a reminder of Pass Christian as it was before Highway 90's rerouting along the beachfront. Her black on white design-work depicts the happy mood of yesteryear which Jean now shares with all of us.



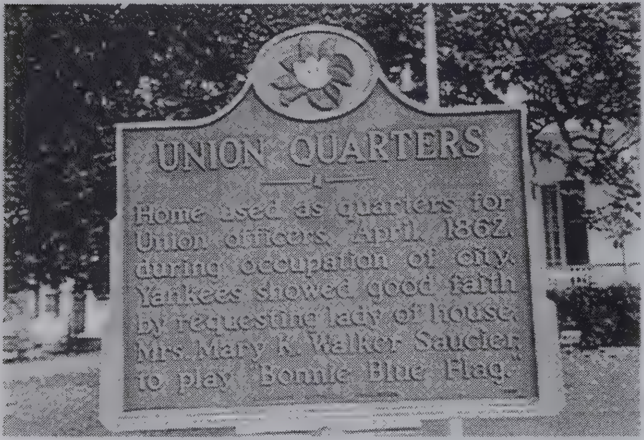
Emerald Town

Helen Currie Caire wrote in recounting that one day many years ago, she was sailing from Cat Island, and upon approaching the shore, she was inspired to write the following poem about Pass Christian.

The town stretched along the shore
Glistening in the bright sun.
As we approached the harbour
We could see light fluffy clouds above
Protecting it like a precious jewel
Wrapped in cotton.

History of Union Quarters -- Pass Christian

During the Civil War, following the occupation by Federal Troops, the home at 243 East Beach was temporarily used as Union Quarters until they moved to Biloxi.


UNION QUARTERS
Home used as quarters for
Union officers, April, 1862,
during occupation of city.
Yankees showed good faith
by requesting lady of house,
Mrs. Mary K. Walker Saucier,
to play "Bonnie Blue Flag."

The superbly restored mansion is architecturally described in the National Register of Historic Places as having been built in 1855. It is an impressive, two-story, frame, double-pile, Greek Revival dwelling distinguished by its one-bay pedimented portico which is set against the inset gallery. It is adorned with a cast-iron filigree balustrade. The octagonal garconniere at its west side was built in 1890, and the dining room, solarium, and porte-cochere were added in 1910.

A cast iron fence fronts the property enclosing a Magnolia Historical Marker which was dedicated in 1960. It reads, *"Union officers were temporarily quartered here during the invasion of Pass Christian."*

Adjoining the *Union Quarters* on the west side is an aging story-and-a-half, four-bay frame cottage which was built by Pierre Saucier. It was last occupied by Mrs. Belle Christovich who died in 1969 at age 97.

Background

Pierre Saucier, Sr. and Ramon Lizana were brothers-in-law who derived their initial inheritance from Philip Saucier in the DeLisle area. They were in close contact with Charles Asmard, the freed Negro slave of the Widow Asmar. The brothers-in-law observed the escalating interest taking place at the Pass Christian channel which flowed past the shore near what is now Market Street. In 1827, steamboat service between New Orleans and Mobile effected even greater traffic. Upon Charles Asmard's death in 1835, Ramon Lizana was named Executor for Asmard's Estate and also Guardian to Charles' freed slave, Winny, who was bequeathed a prime piece of Gulf front property with a dwelling and outbuildings. Winny's need for existence money led to her lot being auctioned – with Pierre Saucier being the highest bidder. This land adjoined the property which he and another brother-in-law, Jean Baptiste Toulmé, of Bay St. Louis, had previously purchased from Charles Asmard. Soon afterward, brother-in-law Ramon Lizana also purchased an adjoining lot to the east.

Pierre Saucier and Family

The first encounter with Federal troops was when the 9th Connecticut Infantry invaded Pass Christian. The Union troops landed on April 3, 1862, while in pursuit of Major Lovell's small Confederate force which had retreated north of the town. The "Bedsheet Surrender" apparently stopped the shelling of beachfront dwellings as a result of Mrs. Manders signalling out to the Federal gunboats to cease their shore offensive.

In 1864, while the ravages of the Civil War were still ongoing, Pierre Saucier recieved news that one of his sons was wounded at Vicksburg. On the return home the young man died followed by the father's death. It was both bodies that reached the Pass soon after, each packed in charcoal filled boxes that were buried in the family cemetery in DeLisle.

Following the war, during the Reconstruction Period, the Pierre Saucier home was billeted as residential quarters for the officers that had set up a military post at the Pass. Those of the Saucier family that remained were forced to live on the second level. One of these was Mary Catherine Walker, wife of Anatole Jacques Saucier, who hid her infant son, Anatole Pierre in the attic for fear of its young life. To quiet her concerns, the Union officer in charge tactfully asked her if she could play *"Bonnie Blue Flag,"* which was a favorite Mississippian war tune. Proudly and defiantly she replied that she most certainly could. Smiling, the officer guided her to the piano. After more than a year, the departing Federal troops were thanked for having maintained a proper decorum of chivalry.

The young infant, Anatole Pierre (Paul) grew up to become City Alderman, Mayor, and Chief of Police during the early 1900s. During a winter vacation at the Pass in 1812-13, President Woodrow Wilson arrived on Christmas Day. Then, mayor, A. P. Saucier and his family met the President at the train. It had rained for several days and water was yet standing in the streets.

Another family story relates that during the same period, the older Anatole had to sneak into the house before nightfall in order to retrieve the family's valuables for fear of confiscation by the Federal troops.

"Some rain you had, Mr. Mayor," remarked Wilson.

"Aw, we jes cleaned up the place for you, Mr. President," quipped Mayor Saucier.

In 1960, his spinstress sister, Miss Louise Saucier, celebrated her 90th birthday. As one of 10 children of Anatole Jacques and Mary Catherine Walker Saucier, she reflected the family story of events that occurred. "Mother was in the parlor playing the piano when the Union soldiers walked in. Because the music was pretty the soldiers gathered around to listen and became friendly. She explained that her parents had lived in the large Saucier home when they were first married, but moved to the west side smaller house once the big house was sold. At a tender age, Louise Saucier had fond remembrances for when her mother played the *Bonnie Blue Flag.*

Genealogical research shows the Saucier lineage from France beginning with Louis Charles Saucier, born in 1634. He was the father of Jean Baptiste Saucier who was born in 1674 in Canada. D'Iberville recruited Jean Baptiste as one of his sergeants who became prominent Sergeant during the early settlements along the Gulf Coast. He later married Gabriel Savary, one of the girls who arrived aboard the *Pelican* that had landed at Dolphin Island near Mobile. One of their sons, Henry, born in 1706, had nine children, one of whom was Phillipe who married Marie Louise Nicaise. They settled at Delisle and had eleven children. The youngest of these was Pierre, who was born in 1804. He married Eliza Nicaise and had six children. Pierre was also the grand-nephew of Nicholas Christian Ladner, the namesake for Pass Christian. His brothers-in-law included Bertrand Lasabbe, Jean Cassibry, Jean Baptiste Toulmé, and Ramon Sebastiano Lizana. The last two, along with Pierre Saucier, acquired portions of the "Charlot Land Grant" from the freed slave, Charles Asmard. This large tract included all of the current downtown area of Pass Christian. Several years after the death of Pierre, Sr., the estate was partitioned between the family members and the large family house had to be placed for sale.

Mary Caroline Dewees, wife of Edwin W. Dewees of Red River Parish, LA

On Nov 1, 1871, the "heirs of the Estate of Pierre Saucier" consisted of Jean J. and Sarah L. (Carr) Saucier, Anatole Jacques and Mary Catherine (Walker) Saucier, Pierre Saucier, Francois Napoleon and Mary Louise (Orr) Saucier, and Evariste Marie Saucier. The 93-foot lot with the spacious Saucier manor was sold to Mary Caroline Dewees for $4000. By the agreement, possession would take place upon full payment of the notes payable with the condition that the sellers would keep the house insured from harm and damage. Ramon Lizana, a brother-in-law of Pierre Sr., owned the property to the East while the property on the West was sold to John Bordage. The Gulf front house lot reached north to Back Road, which was also known as Second Street.

On March 26, 1873, Anatole J. & Mary C. Saucier sold a 65-foot lot on the north side of Back Road extending 460-feet deep to Edwin W. Dewees, Mary's husband, for $1000. It was bounded by Evariste Marie Saucier on the West; Augusta Necaise at the North; and a 12-foot wide alleyway that reached to the railroad right-of-way on the East. On July 19, 1873, a group consisting of W.A. Champlin, his wife, Margaret; George N. Smith, his wife, Seignora M.; and Elliot Henderson, sold a 77-foot wide lot extending northward by 33 arpents deep for $300 to Edwin DeWees. A French arpent measures approximately 200 feet. It fronted south on the railroad right-of-way and was bounded on the east by Ramon Lizana, on the north by Elliot Henderson, and on the west by the heirs of Pierre Saucier.

On September 29, 1874, Philip Mallini sold 15 acres measuring 703' by 1300' located on the southern shores of Bayou Portage to Mary Dewees for $1000.

To complete her aggressive interest in land purchases, for $25 on December 1, 1874, Mary Dewees purchased a 12-foot wide lot fronting on Second Street and extending 475-feet deep from A.J. and Catherine Saucier. It was bounded by Second Street on the south, A. Schwarley on the east, A.J. Saucier at the north and her husband, E.W. Dewees' lot on the west.

In an apparent display of love and affection, on December 11, 1874, Edwin W. Dewees transferred his ownership of the above described two lots to his wife, Mary C. Dewees.

Not withstanding her accumulation of property, Mary Caroline made four more purchases indicating her continued interest in Pass Christian. Between April 24, 1875 and October 15, 1875, she picked up a 12' wide by 225' deep lot from Anatole and Mary Saucier; a 50' wide lot by 430' deep from Ramon and Medard Lizana for $200; a 71' wide lot by 200' deep from Theofile and Amelia B. Saucier for $225; and 100 acres north of Pass Christian corporate limits from Elliot and Fanny Henderson for $1000. With further opportunities, in 1876 she acquired from the Widow Anna Marie Jennings a 400' wide by 1082' deep lot for $200 and a 400' by 50' lot from Ramon and Medard Lizana for $200.

On January 2, 1880, Mary finally was able to complete her land holdings by buying the 60-foot lot adjoining her home on the west from the heirs of John Bordage.

Not much is known about Mary Caroline Dewees other than that she arrived from Louisiana's Red River country to make Pass Christian her home for a period of 10 years. Perhaps her husband had died, when she decided to sell the great home and move to Farmville, Virginia. On October 29, 1885 she sold the beautiful mansion to Louisa Jane Bidwell of New Orleans. Through succeeding years even after moving to Connecticut she eventually relieved herself of her other land holdings. It would be supposed that with her strong desire to amass such a large tract of property that she certainly would have remodeled the large home during her ten year residential stay.

Mrs. Louisa Jane Bidwell, wife of David Bidwell of New Orleans

David Bidwell was a nationally famous theatrical manager and theatre owner in New Orleans. Upon his death, Mrs. Bidwell assumed ownership and management of the St. Charles Theatre, the Academy of Music and the Phoenix House Theatre in New Orleans. She apparently employed management people to oversee her interests while she resided at Pass Christian. Having purchased the home in 1885, the major physical expansion made by her was the addition of a *Garconniere* in 1890.

She lived in the house with her step father, Mr. W.W. Cayton and his wife, giving Louise Bidwell time to pursue her favorite interest. As a dedicated fisherwoman she received recognition for her record catches.

In 1896, the book, *"Along the Gulf,"* described the home as a large mansion house with broad verandas. The spacious grounds were laid out neatly with graveled walks. The well kept lawns were covered with shrubs and flowers of every variety. A severe storm of a few years previous had destroyed 26 large trees and a winter frost that followed had reduced her orange grove and rose gardens.

In front of the home extending out into the Sound was the longest pier in Pass Christian. While describing the many types of fish she caught, of note, the book related that the U.S. Government had stocked the inland bayous, rivers, and bays with striped bass, thus expanding her fishing grounds in the Portage, Wolf, and Malini bayous and rivers. At that time, the Mexican Gulf Hotel maintained a gulf course and clubhouse on Bayou Portage and Clark Street.

Louisa Jane Bidwell's interest in the Pass probably occurred after several visits while staying at the Mexican Gulf Hotel which opened in 1883, located on Davis Street and Beach Boulevard. It was probably due to her avid love for fishing that caused her on October 19, 1885 to sign her initial agreement to buy the house from Mary Caroline Dewees. The agreement was further clarified on October 29, 1885 with the acquisition of five pieces of property for $7500. These included the 153-foot front lot south of Front Street on the Gulf, the two lots from Front Street to Second Street which combined measured 153 feet wide and 510 feet deep. The purchase also included two more lots when combined, measured 77 feet wide by approximately 475 feet deep on the north side of Second Street.

During her stay in Pass Christian there were rumors that Mrs. Bidwell was intimate with Captain John T. McDonald. She showed her fondness by giving him her large sailing and fishing schooner known as the *"Queen of the Fleet."* McDonald operated it as a fishing party boat often sailing the motorless vessel during moonlight tours.

The *"Queen of the Fleet"* fishing vessel was noted for its nearly spotless racing record throughout the 1890s and early 1900s until being replaced by larger, faster schooners built for the Biloxi fisheries during World War I. The two-masted 42-foot vessel was purchased in 1895 by Mrs. Bidwell, later given to John McDonald, and years later, was lost at sea on October 16, 1923 during a storm.

John T. McDonald had been a city alderman in 1888, and served as mayor for three 2-year terms from 1890 to 1895, and served another term in 1903.

Dr. George K. Pratt and wife, Mary Louise Moore Pratt

The Pratts were very close friends of Mrs. Bidwell who, on many occasions were guests at the beautiful mansion. Through the years, their children were also welcome for long vacationing periods.

When the Bidwells were confronted with financial problems, the Pratts came to their aid by lending them monies throughout the problem years. However, the loans mounted up and the Pass Christian home was placed in mortgage. But, at that time, personal physicians were not able to have mortgages or Wills made by patents in favor of their doctor. So, because Mrs. Bidwell had no children of her own, she made her "Will" dated June 4, 1890, bequeathing her Pass Christian property to the six children. This "Will" was probated in June 1900 indicating that Mrs. Bidwell had died that year.

As guardians and parents of the then minor children, the Pratts took full possession of the house and even further enhanced it in 1910, with a new dining room, a solarium, and a porte-cochere.

The children were John O., George, Jr., Albert, Louise, John G., and Adela. It is presumed that once they grew into adulthood and marriage, the large number of siblings sold the property at the demise of their parents.

Frank Wharton and wife Allie Lee, and Mrs. Margaret L. McGrath

Frank Wharton and his wife Allie Lee initially acquired the Lizana property which adjoins the Union Quarters on the east on September 15, 1937. He was operating a grocery store there until World War II began. Prior to entering the Coast Guard, he rented the store front as the Pass Christian Post Office. Upon receiving a service connected injury, he returned home and opened the Wharton Hardware Store after the postoffice moved to a new location.

In March of 1944, he and his wife's aunt, Mrs. Margaret L. McGrath, jointly purchased the Union Quarters property with the intentions of separate living quarters. But, it wasn't long afterward that Mrs. McGrath moved back to the Nelson Hotel, just down the street, where as owner and manager she loved the daily hustle and bustle.

The Whartons took special care to keep the house well maintained within character of its original heritage. With the urging of the Chamber of Commerce's Mrs. Elena Fitzpatrick, a Magnolia Historic Marker was placed at the home on October 6, 1960. The planting of the bronze plaque was attended by a formal dedication ceremony.

In March 1979, the Whartons opened the home to visitors during the Spring Pilgrimage for the first time since the roof's destruction.

Camille's wrath struck the home in 1969 as it destroyed many others in its path, but only the roof had to be replaced to bring the mansion back to its normal beauty.

Ladies were dressed in antebellum attire to greet the hundreds of guests to the home which was furnished with period antique furniture. One of these ladies in attendance was their daughter, Mrs. Ann Wharton Kitchings.

Ann, in remembering the Pratts as a young girl, had been invited to a party "next door" where the birthday celebration was held in the solarium.

As her parents aged, Ann first lost her mother and then her father, while she cared for them in her Long Beach home. She sold the vacant property in 1990.

Heinz and Frances Hoffmann

After almost four years of being unoccupied, Heinz and Frances Hoffman purchased the home on March 1, 1990, and had been in process of restoring each of the interior rooms. Since their full time occupancy in latter 1999, the Hoffmans have restored the mansion to its former magnificence and have done so with determined deference to architectural form and heritage craftsmanship.

The City of Pass Christian has gained another majestic architectural gem that has been preserved by caring owners.

In the attic of an el that joins one of the out buildings to the mansion's kitchen, Frances Hoffman found and preserved a few aged documents, which are part of the heritage of the "Union Quarters." The attached poem was entitled **"The Rhyming Apothecary."** Amongst several other writings several poems were captured from decaying paper leaves of an old ledger and saved from loss by the Hoffmans.

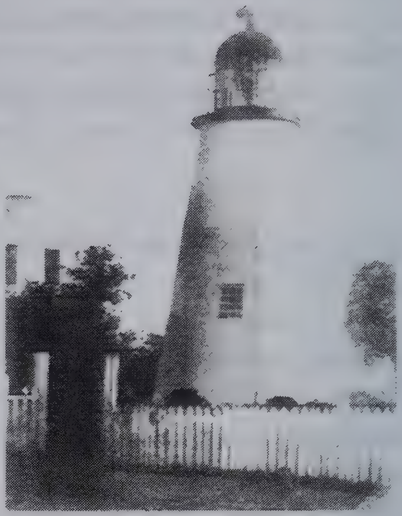
A member of the prescription line
Lived at Newcastle upon the Tyne
No man could better gild a pill
Or, for that matter, make a bill
Or mix a drought or bleed or bled
Or draw a tooth from out your head
Or chatter scandal by your bed
Or just a simple plaster spread
- - * - -
His fame six miles round the country ran
In short, by reputation – was famous
All the women called him one fine man
His name, for truth was Bolus
- - * - -
Benjamin Bolus – tough in trade
Which oftentimes will genius fetter
Read works of fancy it is said
And cultivated the belles by letter
- - * - -
And why should this be thought so odd
Can't men have taste who cure a psychic
Of poetry through his patron god
While Apollo patronizes a physic

Pass Christian Lighthouse 1831 - 1882

(*The photo below was taken circa 1860*)

Origins:

Located at the site of the current City Hall, the first Lighthouse on the Mississippi mainland was placed at the village of Pass Christian in 1831. Simultaneously, a duplicate tower was built at Cat Island as designed by the same architect and builder, Winslow Lewis. The first lighthouse in the South was erected in 1811, at the Bayou St. John outlet to Lake Pontchartrain.



Just prior to the Battle of New Orleans, the Spanish Military Captain Pellerin sold his Pass Christian claim to Edward and Louisa Livingston, then residents of New Orleans. It wasn't until after the Battle and several years following Doctor Flood's planting of the American Flag and government appointments along the Gulf Coast, that Livingston engaged Roger A. Heirn to be his agent in the promotion of Pass Christian properties. While Edward Livingston was a U.S. Senator from Louisiana, he promoted the building of coastal lighthouses and military fortifications at Ship Island. This eventually resulted in the sale of a half acre of his property to the U.S. government as the site for the Pass Christian Lighthouse. Louisa Livingston, while living at their New York residence, signed before New York City Mayor Walter Bowne on December 21, 1830, and Edward signed before Mayor John Van Ness of Washington D.C. on January 3, 1831. The half acre site was purchased for $250 and is now part of the lot where the current Pass Christian City Hall now stands.

Edward Livingston had acquired a total of 15,500 acres from Bartholomew Pellerin, the same vast pasturage and plantation lands originally held by the Widow Asmard during British and Spanish colonial rule. Following Livingston's death, his widow, Louisa, sold the remaining Livingston Tract to John Henderson, et. al., on December 24, 1836.

In 1830, the village of Pass Christian was just beginning its initial growth period in becoming the major "Watering Hole" along the Mississippi Gulf Sound. A lighthouse was long needed due to the increased steamer traffic between New Orleans and Mobile.

Description:

The brick tapering tower measured 28 feet two inches in height and was crowned with a six-and-a-half-foot lantern. In all, the cost of construction was $4,897.50, with Roger A. Heirn being the contractor.

The lighthouse lot measured 104 feet by 208 feet setting back a distance of 60 feet north of the shoreline at the high-water mark. At ground level the outer base measured eighteen feet wide with 3-foot thick enclosed walls. The tower tapered off at the top to an outer width of ten feet and seven inches with a wall thickness of one-and-a-half-feet. The masonry tower was finished in stucco and painted white. Set atop the tower was its lantern of nine panes of glass measuring six-and-a-half-feet in diameter, and standing six feet high. The lantern was topped with a 3-foot, 2-inch iron cowl dome, which was surrounded by an iron balustraded deck.

The ridge upon which the lighthouse stood was 19 feet above sea level thereby providing sea visibility for 12 nautical miles. In all, the Light stood about 55 feet above sea level at the crest of its dome. Behind the light tower was the Keeper's dwelling which consisted of two bedrooms a fire place, and front gallery.

First Lighthouse Keepers:

Roger A. Heirn had been the real estate agent for Edward Livingston, and the contractor for the lighthouse, and naturally, became the first Lighthouse Keeper on July 1, 1831. However, because the government had not supplied the lamp oil, Heirn was engaged to keep the waterways beaconed by providing nightly lighted bonfires. For his efforts, Heirn was paid $.50 per night to keep a pinewood fire blazing on the beach.

For the next 30 years, this light was maintained by the Heirn family with the next appointment of Finley B. Heirn in 1839, followed by their sister, Miss Catherine Heirn in 1844. She remained in this duty until the Civil War caused all the lights to go dim. The Mississippi Sound Blockade was enforced on June 17, 1861 with the U.S.S. Massachusetts posting at Ship Island.

E.F. Johnson was appointed Keeper on August 1, 1865 even though the Tower was still dark. In September 1871, Lawrence Hyland served until April 1873 and was followed by Maria Reynolds for a short period. Sallie Dear was appointed on March 9, 1874 and served until the Tower's closing on September 14, 1882.

Tower History:

The Lighthouse was completed in March of 1831 and was repaired with new stucco and whitewash in 1854. All the exterior wood and iron was repainted with new cement placed around the window frames and the panes re-puttied. The Keeper's dwelling was renovated with new shingles on its roof and gallery overhang. Floor joists were replaced and the fireplace repaired. The interior wash-basin was provided with inside plumbing.

The next-door, story-and-a-half house on the westside of the Lighthouse lot was built in 1850 and remodeled in 1910.

In 1860, the owner of a store located to the East of the Lighthouse, refused to cut the high reaching tree branches and he threatened to build a third floor addition. During the Spring of 1860, the government lighthouse Inspector proposed a height increase of 20 feet. On April 25, 1860, the Inspector reported that it would be best to sell the lighthouse property and rebuild a 48 foot tower at another location with the proceeds from the sale.

However, during the following year the Confederate Army ceased all operations of lighthouses and caused the lenses to be hidden away from Federal Troops. After the War, various lens parts were found and installed at those lighthouses which were considered of greatest priority. It wasn't until January 3, 1866, that 32 Pass Christian petitioners for the Light, produced a response from the Coast Guard. The repair cost of $3,198.52 was approved by the urging of the Lighthouse Engineer, who stated that, "the light is of importance to vessels going to and returning from Mobile Bay." On August 15, 1866, the Light was relit, having been dark for five years.

In 1878, the Keeper's Dwelling was deemed untenantable and was torn down and replaced by a new frame house erected at the same site, which was complete with a new wooden cistern. It was recommended that the tower be heightened by 10 feet, both, in 1878, and again in 1879.

In 1881, the Tower was once again refurbished, painted and whitewashed, but nothing was done to provide better vision by tree trimming or increasing its height.

In August 1882, discontinuance was recommended because, "the light is obscured by several trees. . . the owners refuse to allow the trees to be cut down or trimmed, which makes the light of very little use."

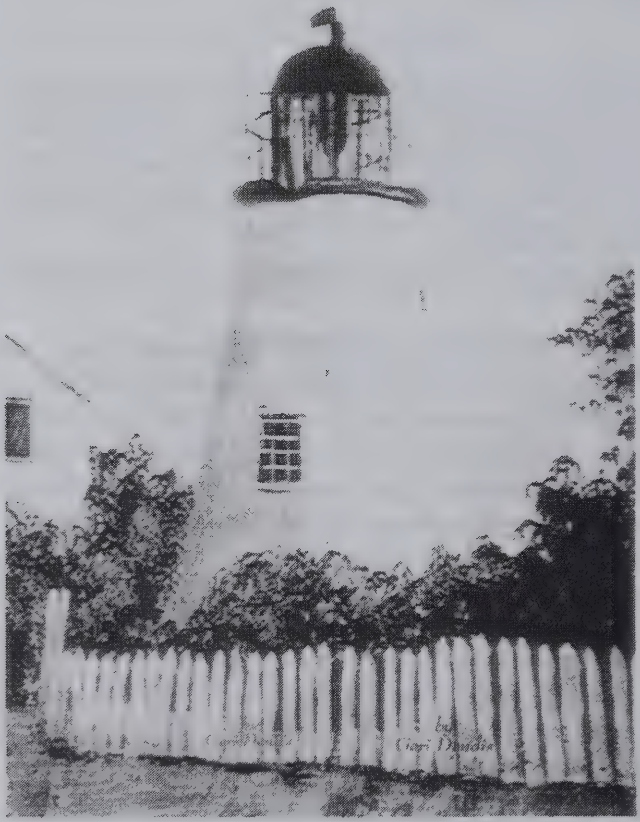
On September 9, 1882, the Secretary of the Treasury authorized discontinuance of it and on September 14, the Light was extinguished.

Disposal:

After advertising in the *Daily Picayune* at New Orleans on April 18, 1883, an auction was held at the site of the Lighthouse in Pass Christian. A high bid of $1,225.00 was accepted from Lawrence C. Fallon of New Orleans with the inclusion of the lot, tower, buildings, and outbuildings.

No information has been discovered pertaining to the dismantling of the lighthouse tower or the disposition of the bricks. However, the house dwelling was later removed during the early 1900s and re-erected near the corner of St. Louis Street and Henderson Avenue where it remained until destruction by Hurricane Camille in 1969.

The house was described as being a rectangular, one-and-one-half story structure with two rooms on the first floor surrounded by a porch gallery on three sides. On the second floor were two small attic rooms. The shingled gable roof extended over the outer galleries and the interior was lathed and plastered. The outbuildings consisted of a kitchen and a store room with an artesian well to the rear. The lot was enclosed by a wooden picket fence.



The above painting is The Pass Light Tower, one of a series of paintings ***by Geri Dendis.***

Mississippi Lighthouse Constructions:

1831, Pass Christian
1831, Cat Island
1833, Round Island Light
1848, Biloxi Light
1853, Ship Island Light
1854, East Pascagoula Light
1860, Merrill Shell Beach

At Right is a photo of a small part of the detailed work produced ***by Buddy Diboll*** *in his scaled architectural model of the Pass Lighthouse and landscape as depicted in the mid 1800s.*

Henderson's Point

Awareness of Henderson's Point, or "The Point," began when John Henderson, an attorney from New Jersey, became interested in the area. In 1836, he and two partners bought all of Pass Christian to mid Long Beach and subdivided the property into smaller portions and sold a number of pieces to interested investors from New Orleans. He established his home at the "Point" soon after he had been elevated from the state legislature to become a United States Senator, and was also a General with the Mississippi Militia.

One of his sons, Elliott, also took residence on the Beach east of Cedar Street. In 1904, Elliott Henderson continued the promotion of the "Point" by forming the Mexican Gulf Land Development Corporation along with his cousin, Leland, who laid out land plats providing residential and commercial lots.

In 1920, Bradley's restaurant and lounge was built to attract the young crowd from the "Pass". In the same year, the Rea's family built the original "Inn by the Sea". Within another year the Ferry from Bay St Louis began landing at Henderson's Point. During evenings and Sunday afternoons, automobiles would park on the main deck while the younger set would dance on the top deck listening to lively music.

Annie's Restaurant was started in 1928, affording continuous fine dining except for halts by Killer storms. During that same period, Allen Johness began digging canals to connect the existing bayous by way of a network in Pass Christian Isles to make it an island resort.

Also, in 1928, a wooden bridge was built across the Bay from Bay St. Louis to Henderson Point linking old Highway 90, now, Bayview where Annie's and Mallini's are presently located. It was constructed of wood planks covered with asphalt. During hot months such as August, a cigarette thrown from an auto would catch the bridge afire. It was locally called the *"Bridge of Fire"* due to the frequency that it would become inflamed. Automobile traffic would be halted until the Volunteer Fire Truck could extinguish the flames.. The bridge was finally terminated in 1950, when the new concrete bridge was completed.

With the onset of World War II, the "Inn by the Sea" was taken over by the Merchant Marines as a training academy. However, in 1976, that same area was replaced by the Gulfshore Baptist Assembly Mission Complex. The initial cost outlay was in excess of $13,000,000 which provides Baptists from all over the country with a place for an educational and religious retreat. In addition to a large auditorium and conference facility, extensive dormitories house hundreds of students with separate living quarters for counselors.

Through the efforts of its citizens, the Henderson Point - Pass Christian Isles Civic Association was formed in 1953. The HP/PCI citizens have, over the years, developed their own Sheriff's Auxiliary force and the Point/Isles Fire Department. They operate their own Water and Sewerage District and own a building on the Bay providing offices and a meeting facility for the Association and other community groups. The folks jokingly call it the *"Henderson Point Yacht Club"*.

The HP/PCI Association publishes its own news periodicals on a quarterly basis since 1986 except as dictated by legal advice during this current intervention of annexation.

As of the year 2000, estimates reflect that the Point/Isles is approximately 65% developed. With the passage of years, approximately 60% of the owners of the 575 housing units have become full time residents of Mississippi. The area now has more than 350 registered voters.

Timber Ridge

(*Below 1978 photo shows sparse trees and sparse dwellings)*

In 1946, Wallace Walker of New Orleans bought the defunct corporation along with its assets through a holding company known as Sunset Realty. He had the land resurveyed, modified the plats, and subdivided Henderson Point into two legal subdivisions called Henderson Point Heights and Pass Christian Isles. Historic Henderson Point maintained its original area, developing residentially and commercially with gambling and entertainment establishments.

A few years later, Walker sold off the Timber Ridge property to a development combine named New South Corpora-tion, which was headed by Jamar Adcock of Monroe, Louisiana.

The Pass Christian Isles Golf Club was incorporated in 1952, and completed in 1953, the same year that the Henderson Point - Pass Christian Isles Civic Association was organized.

Timber Ridge was developed slowly with vigorous land sales, but with scant residential construction during the early 60s.

After Hurricane Camille, sales promotions resulted in Pete Fountain cutting T.V. commercials, a grand celebration was held at Treasure Cove marina with pilings being driven for an anticipated yacht club, and a parachutist jumped from a plane to land at the point of Bayou Boisdoré (Malini).

With slow sales, the development company changed the name to *"Bay Colony"* because of the bitter image left with the few residents and the general public. The sales office was located at the head of the main entranceway, until it was burned down. Some people claim that it burned twice in one night. The transfer of assets was bestowed upon the Property Owners Association served up with a Silver Tray that was presented to then POA president, Dan D'Antoni. Ellie D'Antoni was responsible for having the name changed back to Timber Ridge after Hurricane Elena destroyed the old *Bay Colony* sign.

During the mid-70s and early 80s, weekend evenings at the Golf Club was the in-thing for the in-crowd from the surrounding area. Every month, a 19th-Hole party was organized and hosted by one or two of the local resident families. These gala affairs were festive and went on for hours on end as everyone was nurtured with food, drink, and music.

In the mid-eighties, the Women's Club was inaugurated by the former Mrs. John Wilson and Ellie D'Antoni.

The annual Timber Ridge Mardi Gras parade heralded its first "floats" in 1995, as introduced by Dot Buccola and Doris Duchert. The stream of lighted boats makes a fairyland on water. And, the "Italian Opening" was started by Shirley and Frank Cefalu, having celebrated its 25th anniversary in 1999. The Christmas Boat-Parade was started by the Coast Guard Auxiliary folks in the early '80s, and has been carried on by Bill Mahoney since 1989.

The Origins of DeLisle

During their initial venture along the Coast, the French discovered a small tribe of Choctaws living in the Bay St. Louis area. Their village was called *Chicapoula* meaning bad grass. As one of the ship's historians wrote: "On the twelfth of April, 1699, d'Iberville set out to visit a bay about nine leagues from Ship Island, to which he gave the name of [those waters] St. Louis. But finding the water very shallow there, he concluded to fix his settlement at Biloxi." Thus it was that the shallow waters of the Bay of St. Louis kept it from becoming the first French capital of the Mississippi Valley.

Bienville returned to the bay aboard the *Le Marin*, upon which the young carpenter and journalist Andre Joseph Penicaut wrote, "We shortly afterwards found a beautiful bay, about one league in width by four in circumference, which was named the Bay of St. Louis . . . We hunted there three days and killed fifty deer."

Several other trips were made, including the French Canadian Sergeant Jean Baptiste Saucier who hunted food in the area and stayed there while waiting supply ships to return from France.

Apparently, Bienville and his brother felt the Indians at the Bay were friendly, because a few families were placed there. One of Bienville's entourage was sent there to explore around the eastern coastline of the Bay of St. Louis. They penetrated several inlets encountering and mapping the area as they proceeded into Bayou Portage, the DeLisle Bayou and the *Riviere des Loups,* which is now called Wolf River.

Jean Baptiste Saucier's grandson, Philipe, years later, settled there and requested and received a land grant on July 6, 1794. Situated near the Bay of St. Louis on Bayou de Lisle, it had a front of 20 arpents on said Bayou, bounded on the southwest by land belonging to his brother-in-law, Bartholomew Grelot.

In the 1830s, new persons arrived, some to become Philipe's sons-in-law. New arrivals were Henry Lassabe, Belon and Victor Dedeaux, Eugene Dubuisson, Ramon Lizana, Jean Cassibry, Nicholas Carron, Michael Dragon, Andrew Dimitry, Felix Turin, and Julius Sellier.

As even more settlers arrived, the area became known as Wolf Town, which, by name change became DeLisle in 1884.

The first coinage was introduced to the Coast in the form of copper coins dated 1721. Specimens have been found in the vicinity of the Bay.

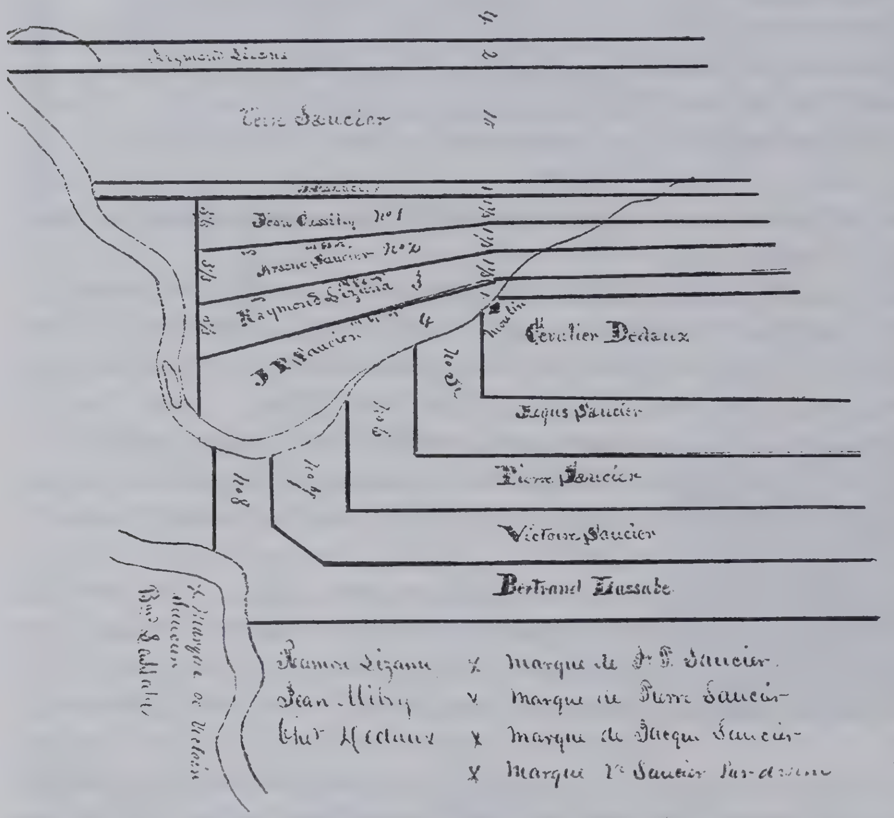
A story goes that one of Jean Lafitte's pirates slipped away from the moorings at one of the Coast inlets and took off with some of the booty in order to bury the cache at DeLisle. In carrying the hefty chest, he also took along his huge vicious dog which was left at the treasure site to perform guard duty. The buccaneer, however, was killed while plundering for more treasures. The dog continued his vigilance until dying of old age. It is still told by many folks at DeLisle that the ghost of the dog lives on. It has been reported to be seen beneath an old Oak tree on dark nights as it prowls and growls all night long at the banks of the Wolf river.

The area became famous for boat construction with several boat yards and lumber mills, such as that operated by W.S. Keel, were established on the banks of several of the streams. Many schooners moored at the "Ole Landing" near Pavolini's Shipyard on Bayou Delisle. There, at the bluff, they would drop off furniture, tools, and food supplies from New Orleans and pick up charcoal, lumber and bricks that were taken back to New Orleans in trade.

"Changing Wolves into Lambs" was the call by Father Theodore Meerschaert in a letter to Bishop Elder on January 7, 1874, with the announcement that a church had been built at the Wolf River. The Church records document other ministrations by Father LeDuc and Father Dutto from Bay St. Louis; Father Oberti from Pass Christian; and Father Van Waesberghe from Jordan River. In 1882, the place was called Wolftown. During the late 1880s, Father Ketels was there and also built a mission at Cuevas in honor of St. Lucy, which was dedicated on October 12, 1890. Father Mortier was at DeLisle in the late 1890s before being replaced by Father René Sorin, who remained there to serve DeLisle and its Missions for 55 years. During that time Father Sorin built churches or chapels at DeLisle, Saucier, Sheri Dedeaux, Cuevas, Lizana, Dubuisson, and at Delmas Dedeaux.

The only church at DeLisle was "Our Lady of Good Hope" until 1922, when a rift caused the Black parishioners to build their own church with the support of Josephite priest, Father Stephen Sweeney of St. Philomena's (Our Mother of Mercy) in Pass Christian. The Black church was first called the Immaculate Conception, but at its dedication was named "St. Stephens" in honor of Father Sweeney's patron saint.

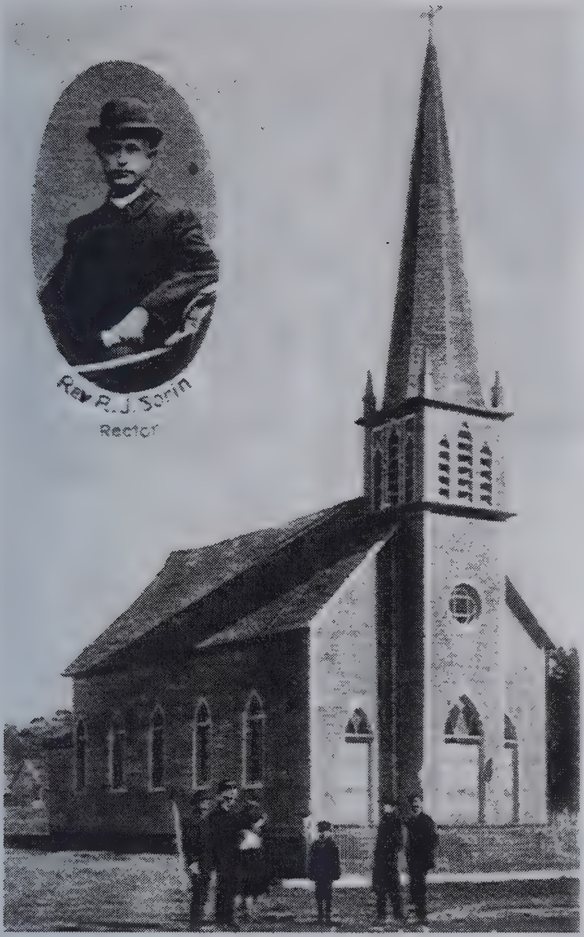
Following Sorin's death in 1953, Father John O'Brien succeeded, and was followed by Father Hubert Wolf, Rev. Owen Farrell, Rev. Joel Bladt, Rev. Mitchell Gilbride, and Rev. Nathan Kay.


Raymond Lizana
Veuve Saucier
Jean Cassiby No 1
Arsene Saucier No 2
Raymond Lizana 3
J B Saucier
4
Cevalier Dedaux
No 5
Jaques Saucier
No 6
Pierre Saucier
No 7
Victoire Saucier
No 8
Bertrand Lassabe
Ramon Lizana
Jean Mitry
Chr Ladaux
x marque de J. B. Saucier.
x marque de Pierre Saucier
x marque de Jacque Saucier
x marque Ve Saucier

In 1969, Our Lady of Good Hope was totally demolished resulting in the White parishioners being greeted at St. Stephen's church. The Church and Parish was once more united as Father Abram Dono, a Trinity Missionary became the first Pastor of the reunited Catholic Parish at DeLisle on January 1, 1973.

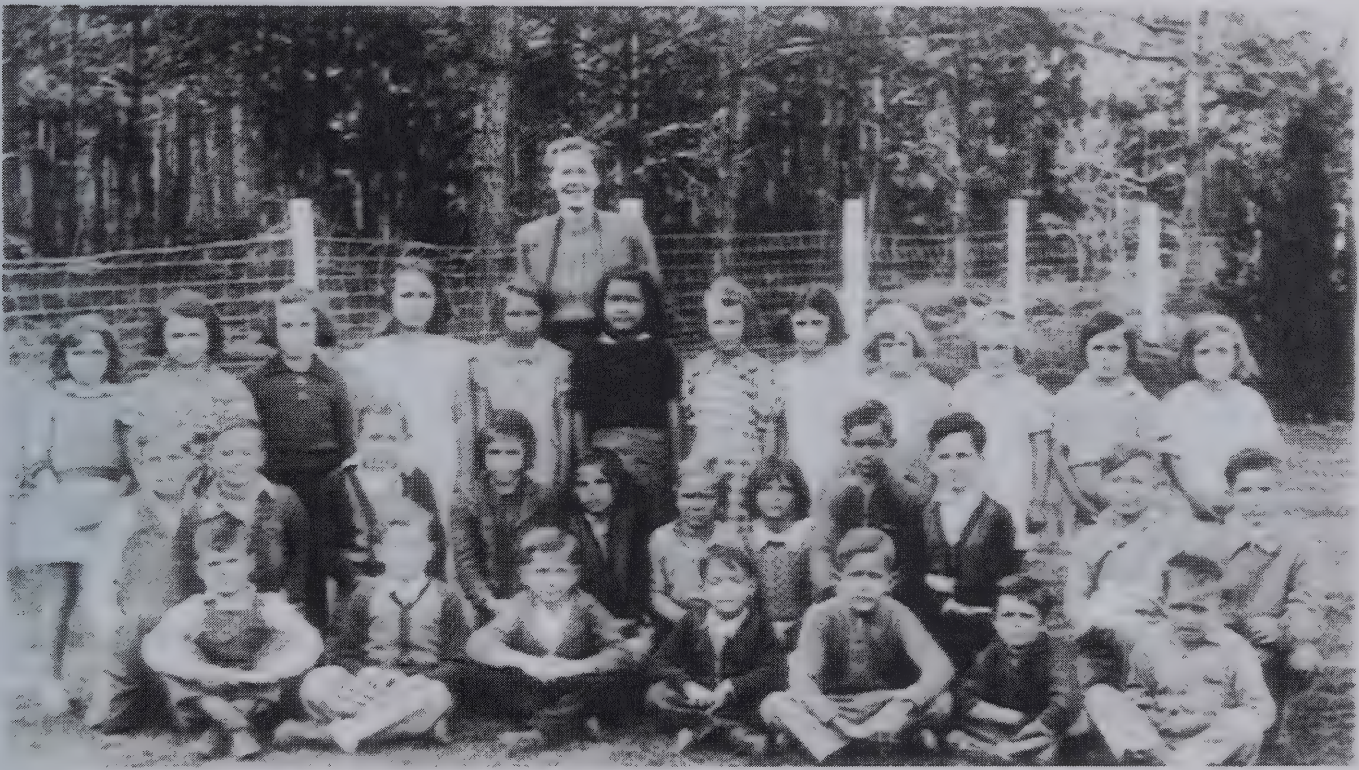
One of the most enchanting areas along the Coast is the small hidden away community of DeLisle. A visitor's first contact is with the many Live Oaks that have been saved. Some trees are reported to be more than 900 years old. The Dedeaux Oaks are in one stand of trees that presents a most spectacular landscape when crossing the Bayou DeLisle bridge.

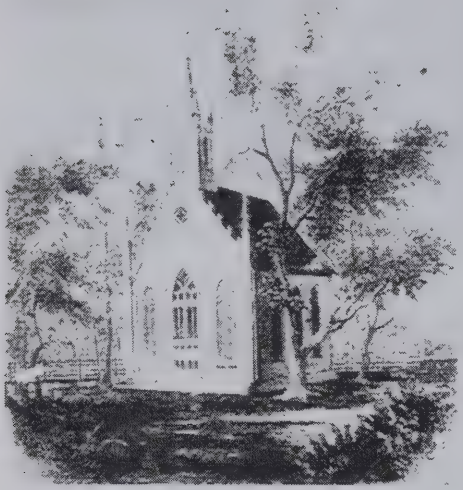
The above survey plat was the subdivision of Philipe Saucier's grant to his surviving heirs in 1820.



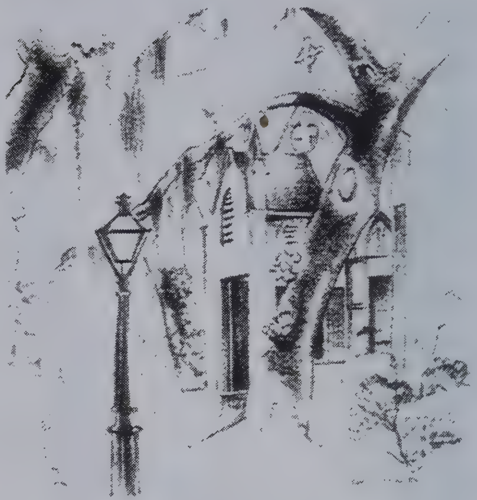
Father Rene Sorin is in the inset of the photo of "Our Lady of Good Hope Catholic Church at DeLisle.

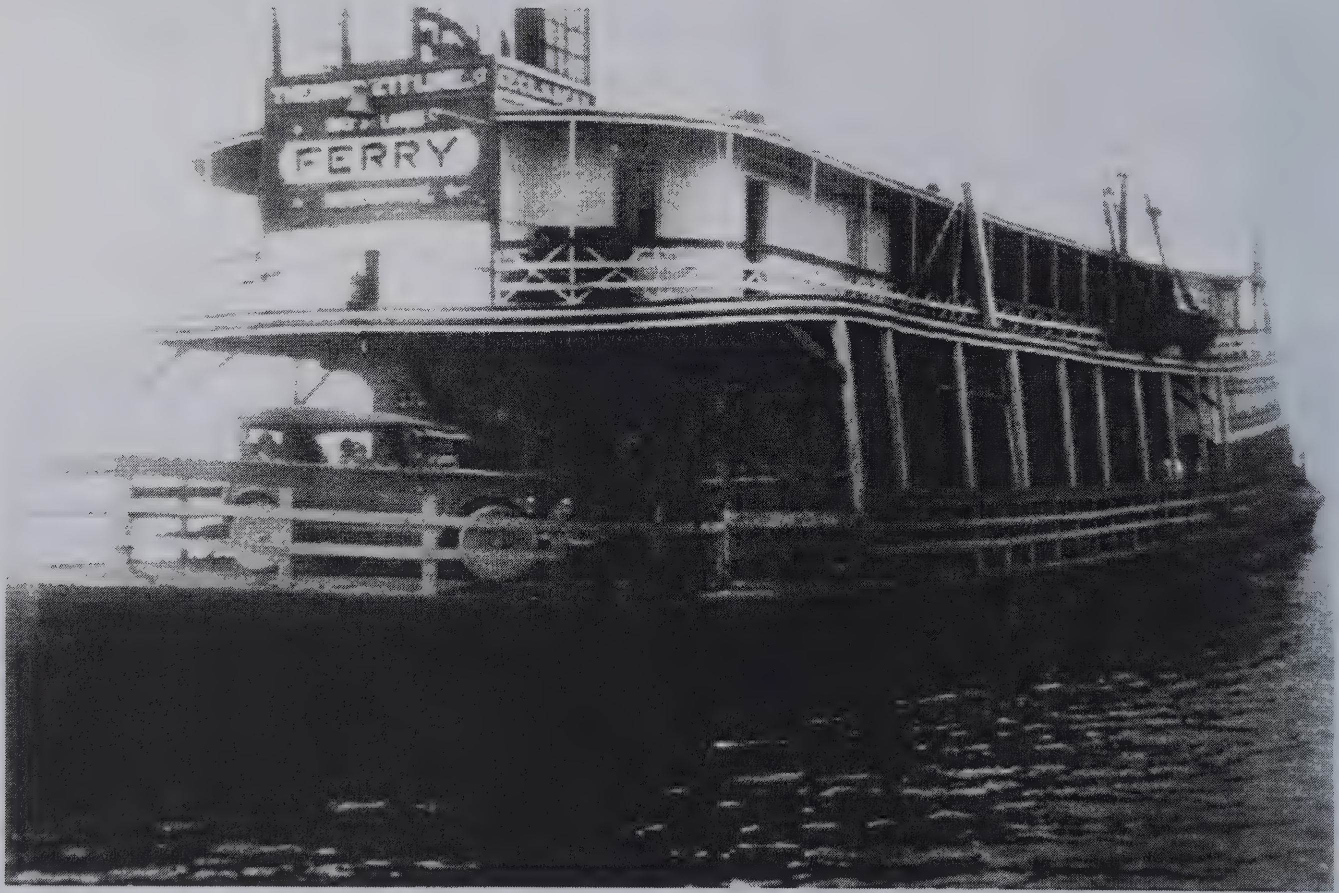
The photo below shows children who attended the DeLisle Community School during the 1930s.
Do you recognize anyone?



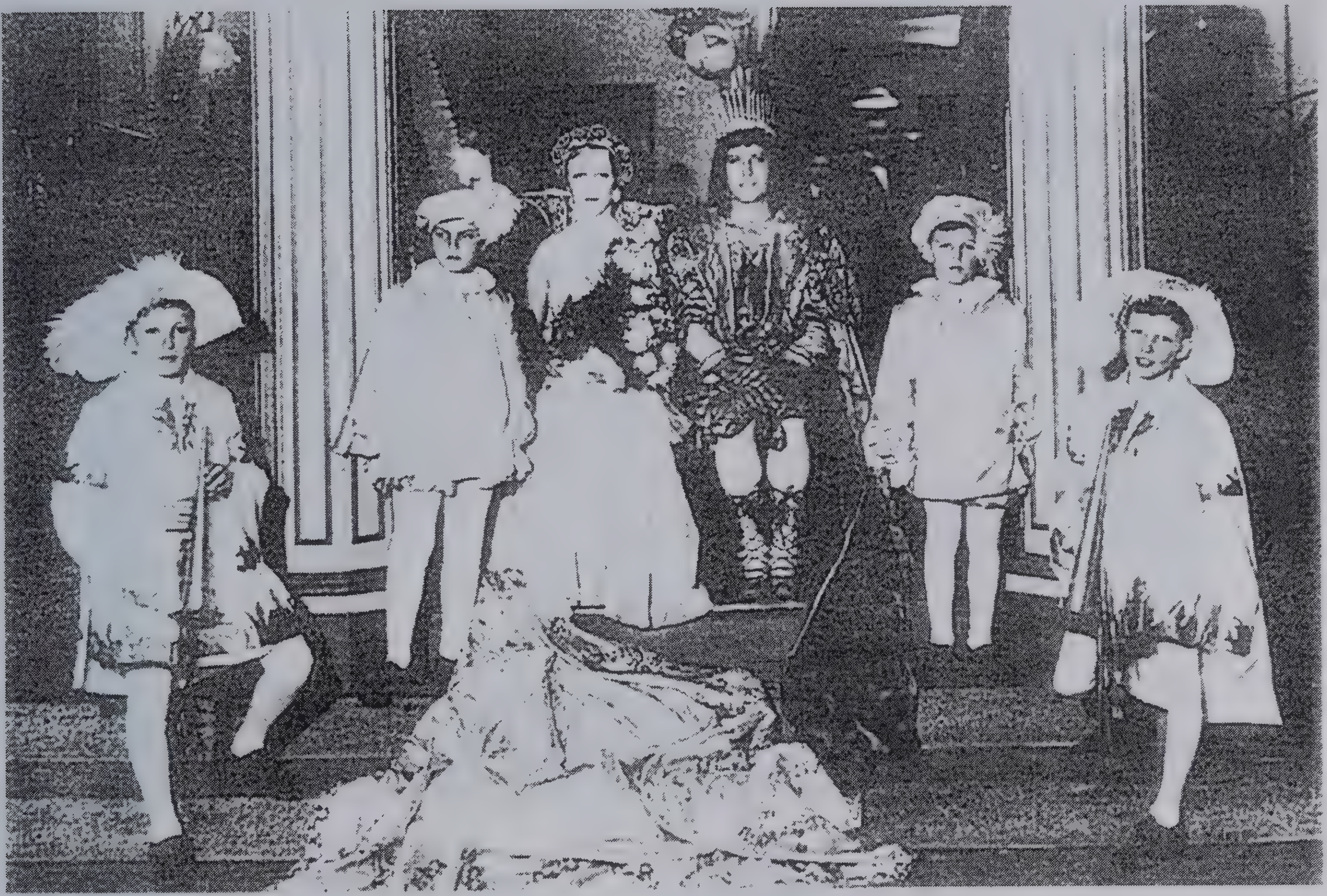


Trinity Episcopal Church
On the left, the sketch was rendered circa 1853, by Mrs. Savage, wife of the first Rector,
On the right, the etching "The nave of the original church, 1849 - 1969, as produced by Russell Gould.





Drackett Ferry that plowed the Bay between Bay St. Louis and Henderson's Point. In the 1920s, dancing was promoted with live bands on the top deck..



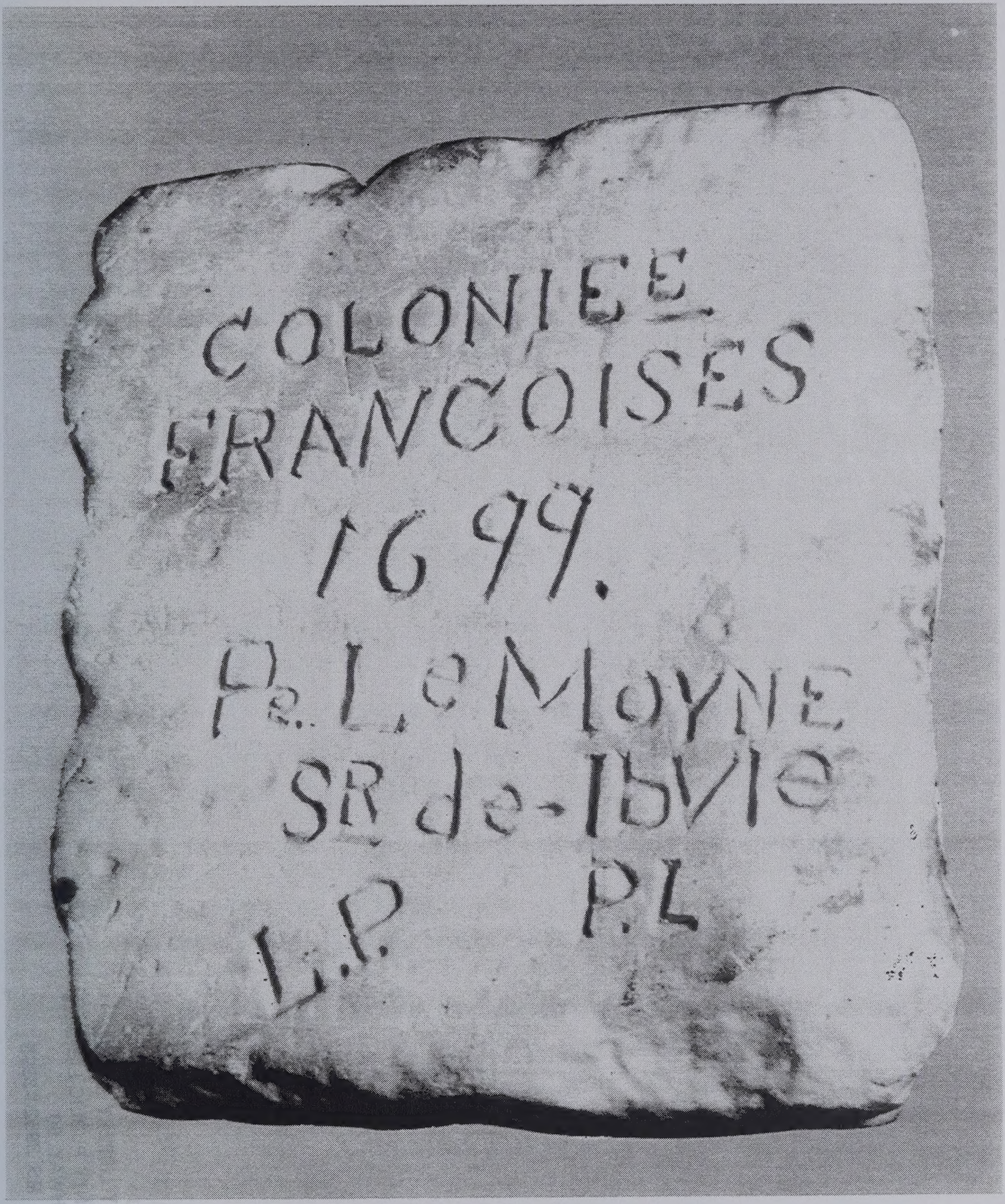
PASS CHRISTIAN

CENTRAL STATES

Gathered above in the Royal Court of 1931, was King Christian II, and his Queen Christiana, represented by Elwood Abbley and Emilie Farrell. The young Pages, left and right were James Farrel, Jr. and Ford Sutherlin.

The above Floats paraded on Beach Boulevard in 1915. The first street parade rolled in 1914.

Bathing Beauties in the Pass, Cap'n McDonald's Prize Bass, and the Men's Smoker.


COLONIEE
FRANCOISES
1699.
Pa. Le MoYNE
SR de-Ibvle
L.P.
P.L

D'Iberville Stone found at the site of Fort Maurepas at Ocean Springs in 1910. The Stone presently hangs in the Presbytere Museum in New Orleans.

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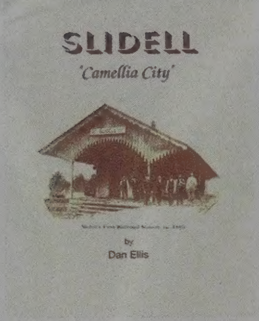
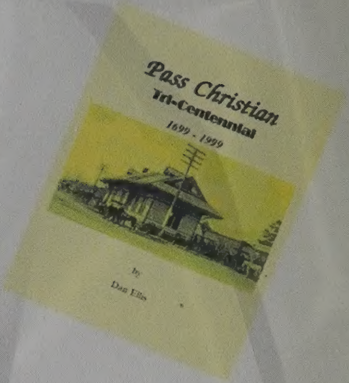
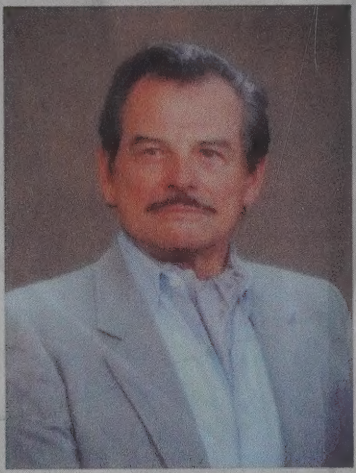
GULFPORT
1898
1998
Centennial
by
Dan Ellis

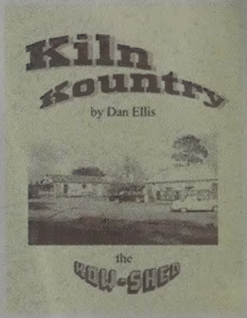

SLIDELL
"Camellia City"
by
Dan Ellis


Pass Christian
Tri-Centennial
1699 - 1999
by
Dan Ellis

HISTORY BOOKS

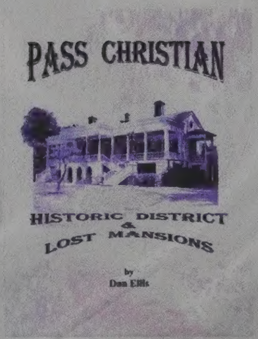
Bay St. Louis
Hancock County
Tri-Centennial
1699
1999
by
Dan Ellis

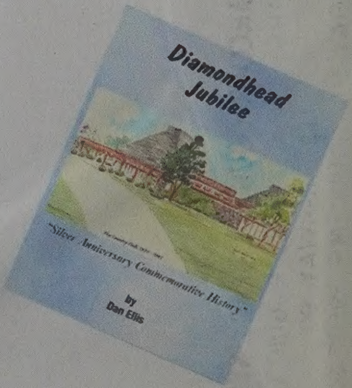



Kiln Kountry
by Dan Ellis
the
HOW-SHED

by
Dan Ellis
228-452-3138

Jubilee III
1847
1997
St. Paul Catholic Church


PASS CHRISTIAN
HISTORIC DISTRICT
&
LOST MANSIONS
by
Dan Ellis


Diamondhead
Jubilee
"Silver Anniversary Commemorative History"
by
Dan Ellis

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